ECCLESIASTICAL TRAINING

CARDINAL BOURNE

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BEING A SHORT TREATISE ON THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF ASPIRANTS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

BY
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Archbishop of Westminster

Francis 1861-

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PREFACE

I HAVE often been asked by my friends, some of them priests who were once my pupils, to set down thoughts, which I have frequently expressed, on the training and preparation of those whom our Divine Master calls to a participation in his priesthood. Want of time in a busy life, subject to constant interruption, has until now made it impossible to meet this request.

That the subject is one that appeals to me, one in which I have been interested all my priestly life, and even before my ordination, is well known. My first pupils, as soon as I became a priest, were aspirants to the priesthood at the old school of St Mary's, Blackheath, which, alas! no longer exists. At Mortlake and at West Grinstead I had again to do with such aspirants, who are cherished friends to this day. In 1889 I went to Henfield to begin a seminary for the diocese of Southwark. Both as Rector of St John's and as Bishop of Southwark no subject was more constantly in my mind than this. As Archbishop of Westminster I have been called first to reconstitute the theological seminary at St Edmund's College, and, ultimately, to re-cast and re-model the school there in accordance with ancient English Catholic pre-Reformation tradition. Thus for thirty years my mind has been almost unceasingly concentrated on this part of the episcopal charge.

Certain facts and very definite principles have thus been necessarily established in my mind; and the conclusions, to which they have led me, may be of use to others, both in the Episcopate, and in the schools and seminaries themselves. There can be nothing essentially new in such a subject. But there may be a new, and, perhaps, a helpful setting of old truths.

I commend my thoughts and their expression to Jesus, the Eternal Wisdom; through the intercession of her, who is the Seat of Wisdom, Mary, the Sorrowful and Immaculate Mother of God; of my beloved patron and unfailing guide, St Francis de Sales; and of St Teresa of the Child Jesus, given to us as the special model of those who, incapable of great enterprises, yet do much for God by the earnest love which inspires their lesser tasks.

FRANCIS CARDINAL BOURNE,
Archbishop of Westminster.

HARE STREET HOUSE,
February 23, 1926.

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Ecclesiastical Training

CHAPTER I

THE REAL PURPOSE OF A SEMINARY

WHEN a boy or a young man has, after due consideration and wise guidance, come to the conclusion that God has given him the qualities and inclination which justify him in desiring to become a priest, according to the present discipline of the Church he enters a seminary to find therein preparation for that sacred calling.

It matters not at what age he may become aware of such legitimate desire. He may be fourteen, or sixteen, or twenty years of age; or even older. Unless there be quite exceptional reasons to the contrary, it is the mind of the Church that he should *then* be separated to some extent from other boys or youths who have not the same aspirations. Of this mind of the Church there can be no doubt. It has been declared authoritatively on many occasions, and explained over and over again by all who are qualified to write upon the subject.

He may continue to pursue the same studies as other boys; indeed, it is necessary that he should do so in order that his education may be of the same order and attain the same intellectual value as that of his contemporaries. There is no

reason why he should not enjoy in moderation the same pastimes, sports, and amusements as they do; but with this great difference—that with his ordination the greater part of them must wholly cease, either as incompatible with his state itself, or as absorbing precious time necessarily consecrated to his Father's service.

Just as the shadow of the Cross fell upon our Lord's life from Bethlehem to Calvary, so must the shadow of the priesthood tinge the boy's career who is called to stand one day at the Altar of Sacrifice. Once that call is heard, realized, and understood, the sacrifice of many things, legitimate in themselves, begins. The seminary—call it school or college, or any other name—where the aspirants to the priesthood are prepared, has a special mission, distinct from that of any other place of education. It is most important that all who have to do with the training of the clergy, whether as bishops, or as superiors, or as students, should never lose sight of this special mission and function of a seminary.

We may see more clearly what a seminary is by making clear what it is not.

A seminary is not primarily a place of study. When the holy Council of Trent passed its famous decree on seminaries, the Fathers of the Council were not thinking principally of the need of study for the clergy, they were concerned chiefly about their sanctification. Opportunities for study were proportionately greater then than they are to-day. Universities were numerous,

well equipped, and largely frequented. And, although there may have been much ignorance in certain sections of the clergy, remedies could have been found without difficulty for mere intellectual deficiences. So radical a measure as the foundation of seminaries, arousing much opposition, entailing great expenditure, and taking long years to come into effect, was in no sense required.

Again, those who were providentially raised up by God to carry out the great Tridentine decree after so many others had attempted to do so, and had failed wholly or partially in their efforts, the great founders—namely, Jean Jacques Olier and St Vincent de Paul—had no thought of setting up new houses of study. The Sorbonne was still in its glory and untainted by heresy. Elsewhere there were other renowned and well-taught schools of ecclesiastical learning. The saintly men, of whom I speak, felt no need of providing better professors or more learned teachers than those who were already available. In founding seminaries, with the mind of the Church very clearly before them, they had quite another purpose in view, another ideal to realize.

What was that ideal ?

A seminary is a place the only essential object of which is to train to a truly spiritual and supernatural life those to whom God has made known, and who desire to accept, his invitation to share in the Eternal Priesthood of his Divine Son. There may be other ends and aims, but they must be wholly subsidiary to this. If they be attained

in fullest measure, while the seminarists have not grown to a true spiritual and supernatural life, then the seminary has failed of its purpose. Superiors and students alike can never think too seriously of this, the only essential character of a seminary.

It is true that since the sixteenth century seminaries have become more and more places of study, whether of humanities or of philosophy and theology. Other colleges, academies, or universities which once gave sufficient intellectual training to aspirants to the priesthood, either no longer exist or have become unsound in teaching or method. More and more, study has found its home and its protection in the seminaries. But this important change is in no way incompatible with the primary and essential object of the seminary, provided it be not allowed to obliterate or even to obscure it. There is a real danger that it may be allowed to do so.

As soon as study finds shelter in a seminary it ought to be in conformity with the needs and standards of education of the period. The intellectual training of the cleric must not fall below that of educated men of his own time. A great part, therefore, of the life of a seminarist, at any rate in his school days, will be taken up with exactly the same subjects as occupy the attention of his lay schoolboy contemporaries. He will prepare for the same examinations, he will pass the same tests, his intellectual attainments will be estimated in the same way. There is necessarily

in all this a danger lest his life be viewed both by himself and even by his superiors, without any reference to the fact that it is the thought of the priesthood which has already gripped his mind, and which *alone* has brought him within the seminary walls. The daily preoccupations which we have sketched are all in their due place if they are never allowed to obscure the essential purpose of the seminary. They are harmful if they cause it to grow dim. They are positively dangerous in the highest degree if they obliterate it in the mind either of student or of master.

Let, then, this thought sink very deeply into the mind of every student aspiring to the priesthood, whatever his age may be; of the parent of every such student; of every superior or master in all our colleges or schools that receive such students: "A seminary is essentially a place whose one object is to train to a truly spiritual and supernatural life those to whom God has made known and who desire to accept his invitation to a share in the Eternal Priesthood of his Divine Son."[1]

[1] I have purposely made no reference here to the signs of vocation to the priesthood, for they are sufficiently treated by many authors.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING AND FORMATION FOR WHICH A SEMINARY ESSENTIALLY EXISTS

TO understand rightly the essential purpose of a seminary we must have a clear idea of the spiritual perfection which is to be learnt in it, and of the standard of life which ought to be placed continually before aspirants to the priesthood.

The perfection to be sought, the standard to be set up, must evidently be of the highest order, for there can be no state of life higher and in itself more holy than that of those who are called to be the ministers of the real and of the mystical bodies of Jesus Christ.

There is no room here for comparisons or contrasts, and I have no inclination to enter on discussions as to the relative value of states of life. The priesthood stands alone; there is nothing with which it can be compared. It is unique in its own sanctity and in the holiness to which it calls those upon whom it is bestowed.

It is true that men, whether priests or layfolk, may seek perfection in various ways. They may by vow bind themselves to strive after it, whether by a vow of obedience only, or by the threefold vow commonly associated with what is called the religious state. But the priesthood in its own

nature binds those who are called to it, and who have voluntarily accepted that call, to strive after perfection with a constraining force superior to all others that men may impose upon themselves. And in so obliging them it gives to them the power, if they will use it, of attaining the perfection to which it incessantly calls them. It is in itself the reason and the means of their perfection, and they need none outside it.

How, then, is the aspirant to be trained for a state so high ?

Here we meet at once a striking contrast between the way in which the Church has prescribed the training for the religious state, and the formation of her own specially chosen flock, her clerics.

In the case of the former, the policy is one of intensive culture for a fixed period, which has been gradually extended, and of segregation, progressively prolonged, from the normal life to be led later on. The novices for a year or two must give undivided attention to spiritual things. All secular studies are forbidden to them. They are kept strictly apart from the company of the professed, save of those who are directly responsible for their training.

The training of the aspirant to the priesthood is of a quite different character. He is to live in the world, but not to be of it: to be *secular* in that sense only, but to be unworldly; to be the salt of the earth, and the light of the world; and, necessarily, on this account, to be constantly

mingled with the earth, and remain unsoiled; to shine in the dark places, and not to be obscured. His spiritual formation and his supernatural training must be in accordance with the life that he will have to lead hereafter. It must be carried on in closest union with his ordinary normal daily life, as it will have to be lived one day in the midst of his life-long priestly duties. There can be no question of a definite long period of intensive culture. Studies will be pursued without interruption. There will be no living apart from those who are already sharers in the priesthood of which he hopes one day to be partaker. He has to live as his Master did at Nazareth in the daily ordinary routine of life, and in it to find sanctification and perfection. In his ears must ever be the words: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men" (Luke ii 52).

Thus, from the moment that he realizes the possibility of his vocation to the priesthood (be he, as we have already said, fourteen or sixteen or of man's estate) his spiritual training must be going on in close conjunction with the normal duties of his state of school-boy or adult student life. He will be studying like other boys or young men, and for a time engaged on the self-same studies. He will play the same games, enter into the same pastimes and amusements. But in the inner sanctuary of his soul he must not be as those to whom the call has not come. There he must be growing daily in closer union with

his Master, learning how to make daily life subservient to spiritual things, gradually becoming proficient in harmonizing material duties with the needs and aspirations of the soul.

The training of the aspirant to the priesthood is in the mind of the Church *sui generis*. It may last ten or twelve years in the case of those whose minds and hearts are enkindled by the vision of the priesthood even before the troubled days of adolescence. It may be of some eight years in the case of the adolescents who, with definite deliberation, set their feet on the road to the altar in preference to any other career. It may be but six, or five, or even four years for those who as men enter a seminary after an accomplished course of preliminary studies; or who, on account of age, are allowed a more rapid access to holy orders. But whenever that training begins, however long it may be, or however much curtailed, it must be continuous. From beginning to end it must aim at giving to every candidate, young or old, a true, real, and solid formation in the spiritual life, making of him a supernatural man, able in all humility and with profound distrust of self, but with fullest confidence in God—to say one day, *Introibo ad altare Dei, ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam.*

If a seminary is able to do this, its one essential work, then it is accomplishing the purpose for which the Church decreed its existence. If it fails in this, then, as a seminary, it has wholly failed. It may have a splendid course of study,

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and excellent masters. It may attain great success in examinations, win scholarships, or have much public repute for sports. It may have great traditions, magnificent buildings, splendid grounds. It may, in a word, be a rightly valued school or college. But if it fails to give to those, whose presence within it is due solely to their seeking after the priesthood of Jesus Christ, the constant opportunity of that spiritual training which will fit them for that most high estate, then, as a seminary, it is not worthy of that sacred name.

CHAPTER III

THE VARIOUS MEANS OF TRAINING

I HAVE said that a seminary is essentially a place of spiritual training; that the perfection to be aimed at is of the very highest order; and that the training to a truly spiritual and supernatural life is co-extensive with the years, few or many, that are passed within its walls.

We must now consider the means that must be taken to attain this end—the spiritual exercises, in a word, which the practice of the Church has for centuries prescribed in order that those who desire to become priests may gradually attain the solid virtue which that holiest of states requires.

They may all be summed up in the one expression "union with God." All that helps and strengthens that union must be taught and learned. Anything that may weaken or destroy that union must be overcome and removed.

The first lesson that is to be inculcated is the necessity of prayer taken in its widest and fullest sense of dependence upon God. The words *sine me nihil potestis facere* are true of every service of God; they are true, above all, of those who are called to work in the most intimate things of God—to be his messengers, his representatives, to act and speak continually in his name. Thus, the first thing that an aspirant to the priesthood must set himself to learn is the *spirit of prayer.*

He will find a space of time set aside every morning before Mass, entitled *Meditation*—an unfortunate but so universally traditional a designation that it would be difficult to displace it. But it is in no sense a mere intellectual exercise. It is the golden opportunity for the soul to learn and to practise that dependence upon God which is the condition and foundation of the union of the individual soul with him, and of any success that that soul may accomplish in his service. Prayer in that sense is the contact of the creature with the Creator, whereby the feeble human will is caught up and united with the Will of God. It is the means by which our free will is enlisted in the service of God, who, indeed, has no need of our supplication, but without it we would have no real share in the works that the Divine Goodness entrusts to us.

This spirit of prayer must come directly from God himself. There are souls who instinctively from early childhood turn to God, cling to him, and without analyzing what they are doing, practise prayer as a matter of course. But such cases are rare, and for most of us the art of prayer has to be learned like any other art. We have to learn its alphabet, to practise its scales, to acquire its rules and formulæ. Those, even, who have already an infused gift will profit by entering on the same study, which will be of great gain to them in moments when God seems to hide his face, while the knowledge of it will be necessary for their future guidance of other souls.

I would now utter a word of warning. Serious, occasionally almost irreparable, harm may be done if a boy or young man, on entering a seminary, is left without immediate guidance from confessor or superior as to the way in which he is to spend the time allotted to meditation. If he is left to himself, to find out as best he can from books how to proceed, or merely told to prepare points over-night and think about them in the morning, he may easily drift into careless dreaming or profitless boredom, coming eventually to regard this part of his day as something useless and unreasonable. Whereas he should learn to make of it, with the Mass that usually follows, the most fruitful action of the day: an exercise that he looks forward to rather than fears, because he comes to understand the power which it gives him for every subsequent action of the day that is just beginning. This habit of prayer, of dependence upon God, of frequently renewed turning to him, is the foundation of habitual union with him, the very essence of a priest's life. It is from this point of view that meditation should be regarded. And it is of extreme importance that this should be fully realized by both superiors and students. If it be grasped practically, students will become, and priests will be, "men of prayer."

There are many methods of prayer, all sanctioned by the Church, drawn up and taught by saintly men. It is for a wise confessor or spiritual director to guide the student to a fruitful choice;

to teach him how to use a method without becoming a slave to it; to be alert in counselling a change of method; above all, to assure himself that his penitent is really learning "how to pray."

NOTE

I do not propose to dwell here on the various methods which are to be found in the writings of spiritual authors. They have all their special merits, and are adapted to different characters. I will only touch briefly upon a method which experience has shown to be specially suitable to the busy, much interrupted lives of the pastoral clergy. It is the method taught by Monsieur Olier, and consists in three acts: Adoration, Communion, Co-operation; or, in other words, "having our Lord before our eyes," "having him in our hearts," "having him in our hands." Or it may be summed up in the three opening petitions of the prayer which our Master has himself given us: "*Sanctificetur nomen tuum*"; "*Adveniat regnum tuum*"; "*Fiat voluntas tua.*"

This is a method which seems gradually to take hold of the very soul, and little by little to colour the whole life, so that all prayer becomes filled with the spirit which it engenders. It can be begun at any moment, easily resumed after any interruption. It comes to permeate life, making it really a life of prayer.

Whatever the subject that occupies our attention, whether the point that we ought to have, and may have carefully prepared, or the ecclesiastical season or the feast of the day, or the pre-occupation of daily care which so often obtrudes itself to the exclusion of all other thought, we can always turn to God in that spirit of adoration which makes us see him over-ruling, sustaining, inspiring either the mysteries of

the faith, or the history of our Saviour, or the lives of his Saints, or the events of our own lives, even in their smallest details. Thus, even what are apparently distractions may be brought to his feet, as we gaze upon him and accept his arrangements for us. Thus we place him before our eyes, the object of our adoring gaze, and desire as strongly as we can that in us and by us his Name may be hallowed.

Then we strive to look at things as he looks at them, to enter into his thoughts and dispositions, to model our hearts upon his Sacred Heart, so that we may desire what he desires and hate what he hates, in order that he may really live in us, that we may enter into close communion with him, that we may have him in our very hearts, that within us " may his Kingdom be " ever more completely.

Lastly, we have to work with him and to be his co-operators; that in all that we do he may be working by us, we being only the instruments of his Will; that he may use our hands, all our internal and external activities, which we can already count up and foresee and make ready for in the day that is beginning, as his own, that " his Will may be done " that day in and by us as perfectly as possible.[1]

Even a young boy may easily learn and practise this method, if only he will not make fruitless efforts after high-flown thoughts and considerations, but bring his prayer into close relation with the ordinary simple insignificant details of his daily life, which, for the time being, are surely God's whole will for him.

[1] A useful summary of the above manner of prayer has been prepared by the Rev. F. E. Pritchard, entitled, *How to make Mental Prayer* (C.T.S., price 2d.).

CHAPTER IV

OBSTACLES TO UNION WITH GOD

UNION with our Divine Master—close, intimate, constant, personal union with him—is the essential object to be aimed at in training aspirants to the priesthood. It must be their life as students, still more it must be their very life as priests. But just as this union is a matter of growth and development, so is it exposed to many a set-back, and even to complete interruption.

A seminarist is inevitably exposed to temptation, to the possibility of yielding to it, to a lessening or to the cessation of his union with God. It is from this standpoint that we should regard sin, as it affects the spiritual life of one who believes himself to be called to and who desires the priesthood.

When a boy or a youth sets out on the path which leads to ordination, no matter how earnest he may be, his nature is not changed or transformed. He has the faults and defects which belong to his natural character and disposition; faults, perhaps, which in the gentle surroundings of a Catholic home have shown themselves but little, or have passed unnoticed and consequently unchecked. He may be instinctively selfish, or self-seeking, or unkind, or lazy, or passionate, or not quite straightforward. None of these things

in any way denotes that he is not called to higher things. God chooses where he wills. But they are all sources of positive sin, things to be resisted and gradually overcome. There will be many a fight, many a disappointment, many a fall before he gains a mastery over himself in these respects. But there must be a fight and a real resistance, oftentimes renewed, if these defects are not to deform his character through life. Contact with companions, observations of superiors, or still more pointed ones from his fellows, will reveal to him many weaknesses of which he was almost unconscious, and sources of sin which he heretofore hardly suspected.

With adolescence there will come the onslaught of awakened manhood, a period of serious concern to all confessors, and of bewildering surprise in most cases, to the adolescent himself. It is the period when he is capable of almost heroic acts of virtue, and is equally at times the victim of the thoughts which assail his curious wondering imagination, and awaken the instincts of his lower nature. It is, indeed, in the majority of cases a baffling time, when resistance and consent seem hopelessly interwoven, and courage and comfort can be found only in general principles, the application of which rests with the confessor alone, for the penitent is often quite unable to see his way clearly through his perplexities.

From the very nature of his vocation it is to be expected that one who desires to be a priest, and above all to be a member of the pastoral

clergy, should pass through very serious crises of temptation. He must be proved and tested so that he may know what he is really worth if left to himself, without the constant help of God. He must know, too, the approach of sin, the vehemence of temptation, if one day he is to be a source of strength and an experienced guide to the souls who will seek from him consolation and healing in their own trials and sins. Not only may he be tempted, and tempted frequently and grievously, but he may vacillate and even fall, perhaps again and again, before he becomes fully master of himself, and shows himself capable without imprudence of accepting the obligations of the subdiaconate.

But whatever form temptation or sin may take, in dealing with an ecclesiastical student, we must view it in relation to his personal union with our Lord. Other motives must not be forgotten. At times they must be strongly insisted upon. The heinousness of sin, the offence offered to God, the outrage of his love, the penalties attaching to it, the reward which resistance to it will receive—all these considerations will be set forth in due time and place. But the supreme motive ever to be kept in mind, and constantly recalled, is the thought that sin lessens or destroys the union of the soul with God. If that motive is firmly grasped, if it becomes the foundation of the energy of the soul in resisting evil, and in striving to please God, all else will be in safety. The soul of such a student, of such a priest, will have found

a weapon and an armour against sin, stronger beyond all comparison than any other. Distinctions between grave and venial faults, upon which many are prone to dwell uselessly and unhealthily, will be of very small account. Actions will be valued in view of their increasing or lessening the union of the soul with its Creator, and a habit of resistance to all that would lessen it will be gradually built up and become, as it should be, a second nature.

Such a habit is of the utmost importance during the critical period of a boy's life. As I have said, he may be most grievously tempted, he may fall, and rise, and fall again. I speak, of course, of falls, however grievous, which are known only to himself and to his confessor. If at once he turns to God with true sorrow, and renewed courage and loving confidence, however weak he may have been at the outset, however often that weakness may have recurred, in the end he will be victorious, because his love for God will have been only momentarily obscured. Let an aspirant to the priesthood once make this the great end of his endeavours, the repeated object of his prayers, the source of his striving, the reason for resisting temptation—namely, that he may live in dependence upon and in close union with God, and, therefore, avoid anything great or small that will impair such dependence, or diminish such union, then he will have found the secret of a fruitful and holy priesthood.

There can be no doubt that those who really

desire to become priests are capable of very high aspirations and of great achievements if they are prudently and gradually led to conceive lofty ideals. If they be treated merely as schoolboys, or as young men who have no thought but of some honourable career in the world, only a few will rise to higher thoughts. But if, on the other hand, the true standard which the Church herself has set be never forgotten, but wisely asserted, the number of those who seek to attain it is at once rapidly increased.

CHAPTER V

CONFESSION AND DIRECTION

IT may be readily admitted that in recent times there has been a tendency to exaggerate both the need and the office of a spiritual director. Persons desiring to lead a holy life have been led to think that it was impossible to do so unless there were constantly at hand some priest versed in the ways of the devout life, and willing and able to give, weekly or monthly, prolonged attention to the individual soul. They have hesitated or halted on the way because no such guide was easily to be found. The strong words of St Francis de Sales on the need of a director were addressed, it must be remembered, to those entering on a more spiritual life, who need teaching in order that they may tread the right path, and guidance lest they should fall back into lax ways, or, on the other hand, give way to scruples or exaggerations. Those words have been too often applied to the ordinary daily life of souls who are honestly seeking after a more perfect service of God, and who, except in moments of exceptional difficulty or of critical decision, ought to be able to judge for themselves. They have learnt the principles which should guide them, and, after prayer to the Holy Spirit dwelling within them, they are competent, and should regard themselves—for this is proof of their trust in God—as competent to act

without any special individual advice. Their confessions should be very brief and to the point, and they must content themselves with a few words of exhortation from their confessor, if, indeed, in a busy ministry he has time to utter them.

It is manifest that all souls, whatever their condition of life, if it be not sinful, may be and often are called to a more perfect life. But their lives are very busy, they have little time for spiritual exercises, they live at a distance from a church, or have only one busy and harassed parish priest to whom they can turn for advice. Yet it would be a cruel untruth to assert that they are thereby debarred from closer union with God if they endeavour to live in a spirit of prayerful dependence on him, and by resistance to deliberate sin make their souls responsive to the whisperings of the Spirit, whose temples they are in virtue of their baptism and confirmation.

One of the most important lessons, among the many taught by the life of St Teresa of the Child Jesus, is precisely this—that the Holy Ghost led her to the highest sanctity, although she had practically nothing in the shape of what is usually termed spiritual direction. "*Dominus solus dux ejus fuit*" are the words applied to her in the Mass of her feast.

I say all this in order to give point and force to what I am now about to assert.

In the case of the aspirant to the ranks of the pastoral clergy, spiritual direction, rightly under-

stood, is a necessity. If it be withheld, God, in his goodness, may supply for its absence. But the responsibility of those who withhold it is very great; the absence of it may easily constitute a loss which cannot be repaired. This I will now endeavour to show.

I trust that I have already established that the call to the priesthood, and the acceptance of that call, carry with them a call to perfection and to a close union with God. A seminarist or a priest who is knowingly and deliberately on a low level is thereby on a dangerous level.

As I have said, the training in this union with God is something that has to be learnt, in most cases slowly and gradually. In the present discipline of the Church this training is not the work of a year or two of intensive novitiate under an appointed novice-master, but a no less real noviceship spread over several years directed by the teaching and exhortation of rector or other superiors, and needing to be brought close home to the individual conscience by the confessor and director, who are habitually the same person.

A call to the priesthood is so wonderful a thing, fraught with such possibilities for the honour of God and the good of souls, that it is sure to be exposed to special dangers, to peculiar temptations, to definite assaults of the evil one. Mere confession, however complete, will not suffice: the ordinary aid given in an ordinary confession by a confessor who does not regard himself as having any responsibility beyond that confession, is

almost useless in such cases. There must be in addition definite, wise, and enlightened direction. Many a sound vocation has been lost for the want of it.

If such direction is to be forthcoming and readily accessible, it must be a recognized, normal and habitual feature of seminary life. It must not be looked upon as something abnormal, recurrence to which is reserved to periods of crisis. If it be regarded in this light, it will fail of its purpose.

It is clear that we are here dealing with matters that extend beyond the ordinary scope of confession. And for this reason it is of supreme importance that every seminarist should have easy approach, out of confession as well as in confession, to some prudent priest who can advise and guide him in the more intimate things of his life and of his soul. It is of equal importance that no long period, certainly no more than a month, should elapse without the student using the opportunity of such guidance by seeing his director quite apart from his habitual, probably weekly, confession.

The psychological reason of this twofold importance is not far to seek. A boy or youth is a very reserved and timid being, where his most intimate concerns are in question; an English boy specially so. Yet he does crave for understanding and sympathy, and will give his confidence gladly, when it has been fully won. But it is useless to urge him to open mind and heart, when the crisis

comes, if he has not already acquired the habit of speaking with true confidence of the lesser cares of his daily life. He will remain half-mute, and will most likely be crushed by a crisis which could have been easily averted or met by one to whom his confidence already belonged. A seminarist has the need of and *the right* to possess someone to whom he can speak freely, to whom he is expected to go periodically, by whom he will be made welcome. The quarter of an hour or half an hour thus spent may habitually be occupied with just those things of which a boy rarely speaks to companions or to form-masters; his home concerns; perhaps its anxieties and troubles; his studies and his more personal difficulties therein on account either of their subject or of their teachers; his reading, both secular and spiritual, in which a wise guide can help so much; above all, his difficulties in prayer or other duties of his life. Then, when a real crisis comes upon him, such as hesitation about the reality of his desire for the priesthood or any similar perplexity, the confidence built up on lesser issues will be maintained without reticence on either side. But only on condition that it is already solidly established.

The critical moments come from very varied causes. No student, so far as my experience goes, passes through his course without one at least, which will make or mar his calling. Some have more than one difficult period to traverse. They may come through safely without help, even as

a dangerous state of health may be cured without a doctor. But such cases are very rare. And I repeat again that many excellent vocations have been lost and will be lost unless every seminarist has frequent and easy access to a competent spiritual guide.

CHAPTER VI

CONFESSION AND DIRECTION—*continued*

IT is abundantly evident that the work of direction, such as I have described, is one that makes a great demand on both the conscientiousness and the self-sacrifice of the priests who are entrusted with it. It is, therefore, essential that in every seminary there should be among the masters or professors a sufficient number of priests able and willing to devote themselves to it. To give to each student the needful time and attention takes up a considerable amount of time. Both are well spent, for this duty transcends in importance and in effect anything that they may accomplish in the class or lecture room. It is a false economy to reduce too much the number of available confessors and directors, for it is in this capacity, and not in that of professors, that they will do their most effective work in leading students to that union with God which is the *primarius et ultimus finis* of every seminary.

A problem now arises of a more recent character. The existence of excellent Catholic secondary day-schools, which can hardly be too greatly multiplied, has brought into being a new class and type of ecclesiastical student—namely, the boy brought up and living in a presumably good Catholic home, and attending a day-school, and passing on to a seminary only for the higher

studies of philosophy and theology. There is much to be said for such an arrangement. First, on the grounds of economy, for many more parents are in this way able to meet the cost of the school education of their boys at a day-school than can afford the very heavy expenses of life till eighteen or nineteen at a boarding-school. Again, it may be admitted that boys at such day-schools work harder, and consequently attain more rapidly better results than is often the case in boarding-schools. Thirdly, they are kept in closer touch with the realities of life, for, from daily intercourse with their parents and hearing their remarks, they become to know their struggles and anxieties. They are conscious of the *res agnusta domi* where it exists. They know that three meals a day, and new suits of clothes, and equipment for games and the rest are not like the manna which fell from heaven, as they are too often regarded by the boy at a boarding-school, who sees his home only under the favourable vacation light when all is made for him as bright as possible. Lastly, and most important of all, they pass the difficult years of adolescence in the normal conditions and interests of family life, in the companionship of brothers and sisters, and their friends of both sexes, and are not as liable to be thrown back upon themselves and their own teazing thoughts as they would be in a purely boy community away from home.

But there is one most serious disadvantage which out-balances all the advantages enumerated

above. It must not be ignored, and it may be overcome. If it be not overcome, the day-school is not the proper place for an ecclesiastical student. That disadvantage is the not unlikely absence of opportunity for that spiritual guidance and direction on the necessity for which we have been insisting.

Whether the aspirant to the priesthood be in his own home or in a seminary, he needs and has a *right* to such special guidance. As I have said more than once, in the mind of the Church, so soon as the hand of the Lord has touched a boy guiding him towards the sanctuary, so soon as the Master's voice has whispered the invitation *amice ascende superius* in his ears, that boy can no longer be regarded, where the intimate things of the soul are concerned, merely as a school-boy. If he is so regarded, his vocation may never mature. It will be in jeopardy as soon as the inevitable attack of the evil one assails it, if there be no guide at hand to raise his aspirations to a higher level than that of other boys, and gradually to lead him to the beginning of a closer union with Jesus the Eternal Priest.

Such a guide must be found, either among the priests who teach in the school which he attends, or among those whom he knows in his home circle. I regard this point as fundamental. It deserves the most serious consideration on the part of the superiors of our Catholic secondary day-schools who receive among their pupils boys who definitely aspire to the ecclesiastical state.

But granted all the advantages described, if this one possible and most serious disadvantage be satisfactorily eliminated, then I welcome the presence of ecclesiastical students in our day-schools where the course of study is duly arranged in preparation for that ultimate career. Such boys usually enter on their higher studies with their minds fully made up, their vocation tried and tested. They form a very useful element in the higher classes of the seminary, which gains a great deal from having a body of students whose earlier studies have been made in a variety of circumstances, and not wholly in one school or college.

But whether our aspirants attend day-schools or boarding-schools, in either case there must be at their service a sufficiency of priests with the knowledge, discretion, and self-sacrifice needed to be their spiritual guides on their journey to the ministry in which they will be one day their fellow-labourers.

We may now pass to the consideration of the details and character of such spiritual guidance.

CHAPTER VII

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OR DIRECTION IN ACTUAL PRACTICE

THE guidance of which I have spoken must be progressive in character, carefully adapted to each stage in a seminarist's career, training him to such well-formed judgement and conscience that little by little he will become independent of its need, and by the time of his ordination be able to dispense with it, save in the graver crises of his priestly life. This ultimate end and object should never be lost sight of. From rectors and other superiors he will, no doubt, receive adequate instruction in the principles of a spiritual life, instruction carefully proportioned to his age and development. It is the close personal application of these principles to the individual soul which belongs to the spiritual guide, as successive needs arise. I propose to refer to these needs in some detail.

I

The first is the establishing in the mind of the newly arrived student of a right attitude towards his vocation and his life *in statu pupillari*. The average boy, aspiring to the priesthood, normally arrives from his Catholic home with a very high ideal of the priesthood, of the lives of priests and

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of ecclesiastical students. He believes that he is going to a seminary, not to an ordinary school; that he will find there like-minded companions with equally high ideals. He is perfectly right in having such ideals, and in expecting to find them in others. But he is without experience, and boy-like, he is unable to distinguish between surface appearances and underlying realities. Moreover, he easily fails to make allowance for human frailty, and may be disappointed because everyone is not at every moment quite on the level where justly and reasonably he would fain see them.

Two possible situations may confront him. He may be in a thoroughly fervent house where the true ideal of the priesthood is constantly and consistently upheld by superiors, and is accepted, and in the main striven after, by the students; where the appeal is always to conscience and not to the usual sanctions and penalties of ordinary school-boy life. Even here he will find disappointments. Just as he himself is not by any means perfect, so will he not find perfection around him.

Or he may be in a school where, especially owing to the too great assimilation of the students' life to that of those who are preparing for less sacred careers, the ideal has been, knowingly or unwittingly, allowed by superiors to become definitely lowered. He finds that, so far as he can judge, no one, even if he does aspire to the priesthood, is aiming at anything higher than the

life of an ordinarily good Catholic school-boy. He may even notice an apparently higher standard of life among his companions to whom the priesthood has made no appeal: that the lay boy is as earnest and edifying, perhaps more so, than the boy whose thoughts are supposed to be directed towards the sanctuary.

Everyone who has experience knows the inevitable result. The newcomer faintly discerns and then perceives fully the contrast between a long-cherished ideal and the reality, a contrast which he may easily exaggerate. He is in imminent danger of disillusionment, leading either to the abandoning of what may be a very real vocation, or to the casting away of his former ideals as impossible, with a gradual descent to the much lower level generally accepted by a boy. It is here that a spiritual guide may and ought to intervene to prevent very serious consequences. He must make his penitent understand that his ideal, if true, ought on no account to be lost or rejected; that he must not judge others rashly; that under the foibles and failings which have disappointed and even shocked him there may be very solid virtue and earnest striving; that, after all, he will be judged by his own correspondence to grace, and not by the shortcomings of others, except in so far as he be the cause or occasion of them. In this way, by prudent and encouraging words a vocation will be saved, and maintained on its natural level of aspiration towards a true ideal.

Another matter in which a new student will need assistance is in a closer knowledge of himself, and of the faults of character and disposition which need correction, and in learning and in understanding how to develop in himself a true spirit of prayer and of dependence upon God. These things cannot be properly mastered without the patient help of a competent spiritual guide. If they are not learnt at the outset, much valuable time is lost, and careless habits are formed with far-reaching harmful consequences.

II

The next period of a student's life which calls for special attention is usually towards the end of the second year of his course, or thereabouts. It affects youths at school, rather than young men occupied with philosophy or theology. For two years or so they have advanced unhesitatingly, borne on to some extent by the newness of their life and the variety of its interests in companionship, studies, and games. The ceremonies of the Church, the liturgy and chant rendered in a great school with a magnificence to which they were heretofore unaccustomed, have had their part in making their lives bright and happy. Then the monotony of daily routine begins to tell. The priesthood seems so far off, and there are so many unchanging years to traverse before the altar is reached. This period often coincides with part

of the natural shock of adolescence. It is a moment of difficulty and peril—a real temptation to the *acedia* or "accidie" of which the old authors speak. Everything palls. Interest and energy seem to evaporate in spiritual things, in intellectual interests, even in sports and games. Here the spiritual guide is needed more than at any other time. The condition is so common as to be normal; and, though it may last several months, it is essentially transitory and *no decision should be taken while it lasts.* It may be mere temptation, or a purely physical condition. It is but rarely a sign, by itself, that the vocation has been mistaken. The director will point out that all life in every career is sooner or later very monotonous; that to seek to avoid monotony, save by devotion to duty, is a false policy leading to disaster; and that every faithful priest must be prepared at one time or other for the monotonous drudgery of uncongenial and unrequited service. Meanwhile, though there be little or no consolation in prayer, perseverance in prayer must be strenuously insisted upon, and every effort made to maintain courageous devotion to daily duty, however distasteful it may have become. It is a period which may quickly lead either to irreparable loss or to a much closer union with God. The result is largely dependent on the prudence and patience of the spiritual guide.

III

I have just touched on the crisis of adolescence, which is the period of all others calling for wise guidance. The main part of the work will be in the actual routine of confession, but not infrequently the subject will arise in the strict confidence of spiritual direction outside that sacred tribunal. No one will be surprised to find that those who are called to the priesthood do often experience in youth very strong temptations arising from their newly awakened instincts of manhood. It is the obvious attack on one who is called to a life of perpetual continence, so obvious that the evil one rarely fails to make use of it. And it is well that it should be so. For if the will gains its mastery, even after a hard struggle and some defeats, in this period of life, the future is far safer as a rule than when the contest begins later on. Boys of apparently unemotional character have sometimes very deep-seated sources of feeling, sensation, and temptation. Every confessor should be prepared to cope with this stage in a student's career. There is no necessity to rehearse the commonplaces of moral theology dealing with the question. I will merely set down some guiding principles which are the fruit of experience.

First, such temptations are no sign of absence of real vocation. They are almost a proof of its reality. A boy when thus assailed is apt to imagine that he alone has such painful experience.

He must, consequently, be reassured on this point and made to feel that he is entering on a combat of a prolonged nature which most men have to face.

Secondly, even a really good boy with an undoubted vocation, who habitually tries to live united with God and does not neglect prayer, may for a time be repeatedly swept off his feet by the strength of temptation, and yield to sins either of the imagination or of solitary act, returning promptly to his Master by immediate sorrow and speedy confession. It is a discouraging time for both himself and for his spiritual guide. But neither must lose heart, but rather profit by this time of trial and possible sin to build up a solid foundation of humility, of self-distrust, of unbounded trust in God, leading to more fervent prayer. Little by little, in most cases, the will thus supernaturally strengthened will assert its permanent mastery, and a priestly soul will come forth from the struggle full of sympathy and compassion for all who may be tempted in like or other ways. Throughout the struggle the distinction must never be forgotten that exists between temptation and consent, a distinction which the volumes written by theologians have never been able to make practically plain to the soul in the actual throes of temptation.

Thirdly, when natural curiosity is definitely awakened, it is to the spiritual guide, in the default of parent, or house-master, or other

similar person holding authority, that the boy has the right to turn for such plain enlightenment on his own physical nature as may be needed to prevent his mind working too persistently in the search of such knowledge. It is clear that no one should be admitted to the subdiaconate without knowing, well before that important step, what chastity and continence imply merely in the natural order.

Lastly, great patience and forbearance should be exercised in dealing with students at this time, for their characters are often temporarily strangely altered by the physical changes and spiritual perplexities which are working within them. They are *désorientés*. The law-abider becomes the law-breaker. The brilliant appear dull. The hard worker suddenly takes on the aspect of the idler. One who was bright loses his joyousness. It is the spiritual guide who especially must be awake to these transformations, for he is acquainted with their cause. But all superiors and masters should walk warily in dealing with the adolescent, lest they crush him by undue harshness in judging faults of which he is only partially conscious and for which he is certainly not wholly responsible.

IV

I pass now to another period in a student's life which calls for the closest attention of his spiritual guide—namely, the vacations which he passes at

home, away from school or seminary. In the mind of the Church the vacation is not *primarily* for rest or change, though both are necessary. But it is intended as a time of real test to see if the habits of life gradually being formed in the seminary are becoming a real part of the aspirant's very existence, or merely an external vesture to be worn at school and thrown aside elsewhere. This time of holiday is the *real test* which shows whether the vocation is a true one, accepted with all its consequences; or merely an imaginary one, or a true one for which the recipient is not prepared to pay the appointed price. For some boys this test is of paramount importance—namely, those, often very attractive and much liked, who habitually follow the line of least resistance and swim with the tide. They are always down in the morning, present at all duties, fairly diligent in work, on excellent terms with masters and companions. This may denote real and solidly acquired habits of virtue. But it may mean very little beyond a quiet, easy-going character, adapting itself readily and pleasantly to existing circumstanecs. The vacation is, and is meant to be, the test of reality, and it is a very urgent duty of the spiritual guide to apply it, and to watch closely the result.

Certain duties are naturally suspended in vacation time, such as the regular hours of definite study and the like. But there is no vacation in the spiritual life. Mental prayer, union with and dependence upon God; such spiritual exercises as

the rosary, reading of a devotional character; daily attendance at Mass and very frequent Communion, when the Church is not too far distant; readiness to assist at the altar; some amount of useful study or serious reading—for these things there is no vacation, they are a necessary part of the life both of an earnest priest and of the conscientious student who aspires to be an earnest priest one day.

So, too, the avoidance of unnecessary possible occasions of temptation, care not to become entangled in friendships and acquaintances inconsistent with the future dedication of the soul to the service of God alone, circumspection in amusements and associations—these are things inherent in the very conception of vocation to the priesthood. They remain unaltered, whether the seminarist be in the seminary or in his home, or with friends. He is already by the very vocation which he believes that he has received, and which he has accepted, *segregatus*—that is, to some extent already set apart for divine things.

The spiritual guide must take very great care to impress all this on the conscience of his penitent before the vacation, and after it to judge closely the extent to which the true priestly spirit of devotion to God's own service before all else has already taken possession of his penitent's soul. The student should be absolutely frank as to the manner in which he has passed the time of probation afforded by his holidays; and the director will naturally make every allowance for the

inevitable shortcomings to which human nature is liable, while never minimizing the importance of the principles involved in this, which is the only true view of a seminarist's vacation time.

V

The last period calling for special attention is that which immediately precedes the reception of the subdiaconate, when the student has to make up his mind that he, in response to the divine call, and trusting to the divine help, desires and is willing to accept for life the grave responsibilities of the ecclesiastical state. *Hactenus liberi estis.* This decision has been practically taken in the reception of the tonsure, to which nowadays none may be admitted unless he really intends to become a priest. The subdiaconate is the solemn, definite ratification of that earlier decision and of the successive steps which have led to it since the day when the aspirant entered the seminary. If he has had a wise and prudent guide, and has been open and frank in his intercourse with him, a decision is usually arrived at without much, or any, hesitation.

Apart from these specific epochs in the life of the aspirant to the priesthood, all fairly well defined, there are other contingencies which may arise at any time, or never arise in any way. A director must be prepared for them.

Such are hesitations about vocation when the

supernatural becomes obscured, and there is no sensible fervour. All is dull and dreary, the future far off and uncertain. During such a trial the penitent must be encouraged to brace himself to a life of simple faith, remembering the certainty of earlier hopes. No decision is safely possible till the cloud has passed and the soul is living in normal conditions again. Such a moment arrives sometimes after a vacation, owing to some acquaintance innocently or foolishly made, which suddenly preoccupies the mind with dreams of a quite different future. The mere recalling that any such future is, in any case, still a very long way off, is helpful in restoring balance and tone to the troubled imagination. It is a moment for very kind, tactful, and sympathetic guidance.

Then vocation may be temporarily menaced by difficulty in study, either as a whole or in some particular branch; or, again, by the difficulties and misunderstandings which difference of temperament create between certain students and individual superiors. It is for the spiritual guide to steer his charge skilfully through these shoals, without, of course, interfering in any way with matters of external discipline, in which, in his capacity of a spiritual director, he must not intervene.

VI

Lastly, the spiritual and mental equilibrium of a student may, for a time, be seriously disturbed by the death of a father or mother, or by other

home troubles. I have known students to be so overcome by such inevitable sorrows as to abandon all idea of becoming priests. Occasionally the question may arise as to the obligation of a student to suspend his studies in order to make provision for some near relative who has become dependent upon him. Such cases do occur, though very rarely. In all such anxious and difficult contingencies the advice and support of a trusted spiritual guide are very greatly needed.

Enough has been said to show that spiritual guidance and direction of a close and intimate character are needed for the effective training and formation of a candidate for the priesthood. To be effective the following conditions are needed:

1. The guide must be himself a spiritual man, striving to lead a life of union with God, and giving edification in the discharge of his priestly duties.

2. He must not have too many penitents, but have freedom to give ready access to those who seek help from him. Let me repeat that the average boy will not seek help in the graver crises unless he is accustomed to easy approach when he wishes advice on minor matters.

3. He must be supernatural, regarding the boyhood, of which he has so responsible a charge, with the greatest reverence, as his younger brothers in the priesthood of his Master. He must be ever on his guard against the mere

human affection to which boyhood so easily appeals.

4. He must follow the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and not anticipate it, and pray often and earnestly for help to know and guide individually the souls entrusted to him according to the plans of God who made and alone fully knows those souls, and not according to his own ideas.

5. His great aim must be gradually to render those whom he guides independent of his guidance. In the early days he must continually lay down sound principles and see closely to their individual application. Little by little he will leave the application to the judgement of the penitent, watching closely, however, to assure himself that the latter is judging wisely and accurately. By the time the priesthood is reached, the principles of the spiritual life should have been fully taught and learnt, and their application to all ordinary concrete cases rendered easy and accurate.

Then his task is done, and when he kneels before the newly ordained priest whom he has trained and formed, perhaps from boyhood, for the service of the altar, and kisses his anointed hands and receives his blessing, he may say to himself that he has accomplished one of the greatest works which God has ever given to a man to do.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FUNDAMENTAL MOTIVE OF A PRIEST'S LIFE

IT is during this time of preparation that the ecclesiastical student must learn and root firmly in his heart the motive which is to be the mainspring of his life as a priest, the inspiration of his thoughts, of his words, and of his acts.

No one can act without an impelling motive. What is that motive to be in case of one who seeks the priesthood, and becomes a priest for ever?

We see many motives in strong action around us in the world. The primitive and primary one is the need of daily bread to sustain existence. For this all men strive and toil, whether it be for a mere subsistence, or to maintain and extend the ease, the comfort, the attractiveness, the luxury of their surroundings. Many would be very listless and idle were it not that daily bread is a necessity, however simple or elaborate the interpretation which we apply to it. It is the great motive force of human action.

Next, there is the urgent impulse spurring a man on to restless endeavour which comes from the love, pure and devoted, of others. A cherished wife, beloved children, and the longing desire to provide for them now and in the future, to make for them a happy home, to surround them with comfort, and to guard them against harm—these

are among the highest and noblest sources of human activity, drawing forth treasures of self-sacrifice. This is the normal career intended for the majority of mankind, and is incalculable in its power for making a man give of his very best.

Next, there is ambition in all its forms, laudable and restrained, or exaggerated and over-reaching. A man wishes to get on in trade, in his profession, in a public or political career, and he is prepared to labour incessantly, to devote both day and night to toil, to imperil health, to take great risks, in order to attain the object which he has set before himself.

All these things a man may do, if he uses legitimate means, without offending God and in dependence upon him, thus sanctifying himself in the discharge of the duties of his state of life.

Other motives might be enumerated and described, but they may all be classified ultimately under one or other of the above three heads.

Do we sufficiently realize that in the case of the priest, and, therefore, of the aspirant to the priesthood, these tremendous motives which pervade all the energies of other men cease to exist, and ought not to be, and practically cannot be, taken into account?

In the first place, a priest in modern circumstances, in such a country as this, will never want for daily bread, interpreted even in a very generous sense. Unless he openly throws aside his obligations, his priesthood makes of itself provision for his bodily needs. He may become a careless,

indifferent man. Unless that carelessness be very gross, he is sure of house and food and a fair measure of comfort. The faithful are tolerant; superiors cannot, and do not exercise a burdensome oversight. As the late Father Bridgett, C.SS.R., once said to me: "There is no man on earth who can be so utterly lazy as a careless priest, and yet be sure of his daily bread; in any other career he would have no chance of finding it."

Again, a priest accepts voluntarily a lonely life. None will ever have the constraining claim upon him which wife and children make upon the head of a family. Other relatives may, if he possess superfluity, make a claim upon his generosity, if they be in need. But they can never be a real motive of his work. He is in the things of his priesthood *sine patre, sine matre, sine genealogia.*

Lastly, ambition, in its ordinary sense, must have no place in his life. He may, indeed, rejoice in the success of his work, if his joy be for his Master. For him, too, he may welcome wider and more strenuous spheres of work. Honours and dignities may come to him from his Master's hand to be used for him, bearing with them graver responsibilities which will call one day for a more strict account of the five talents thus bestowed. But ambition, legitimate enough in the layman, must in the priest be most carefully watched in order to be resolutely rejected.

Is he, then, to be left rudderless and motiveless, deprived of all the stimulating forces which underlie the energies of ordinary men? No, for he

has in the very essence of his priesthood a motive more powerful than any other. He is *alter Christus*. One day there was said to him by his Master: *Jam non dico vos servos, vos autem dixi amicos*. The love of God, the love of Jesus Christ, the love of souls for Christ's sake, this is the only motive worthy of the priest, but it is a motive full and strong enough to take the place of all other motives, and more powerful than them all together, even in their highest activity. From the beginning to the end of his priestly career his Master will be whispering in his ear: "Lovest thou me?" And he must be able to say at any moment, with ready, trustful answer: "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

It will be always well with the priest who, having learnt this motive in his days of preparation and implanted it deep down in his heart, enters on his priesthood determined to maintain and strengthen it within him. It will suffice for all needs and for the greatest enterprises. Nothing can take its place.

Woe to the priest who has never learnt, or who, having learnt, has forgotten this all-important lesson; for, if he love not God so that that love is the constraining motive of his priesthood, he is indeed unhappy, for his life is without the one thing that makes a priest's life worth living. He may be outwardly respectable, and his natural qualities pleasing and attractive, but his ministry will bear little fruit. Only too easily will he

become a very miserable thing—a priest who is self-seeking, comfort-loving, shirking unpleasant duties, glad of any excuse to absent himself in body or in mind from the monotonous routine of ordinary priestly duties, snatching excuses for a holiday, attached to money and the pleasures and advantages which it commands, cynical, critical, grumbling, and falling to a lower level of generosity than is attained by many a layman who has no very exalted aspirations. In a word, he will become a priest, whose priesthood is not the very essence of his existence, and the greatest treasure of his being, but a vesture worn in ungainly fashion, which he would readily cast aside, were it not for those very motives which, legitimate in the layman, are unworthy of the priest of God.

CHAPTER IX

HOW IS THE GREAT MOTIVE TO BE ACQUIRED ?

HOW is this great motive of love of God to be acquired? How is it to become the true and sufficient driving power of a priest's existence and work? It is clearly the gift of God himself, certainly to be obtained if we ask him. In other words, it depends on prayer. In order to love God with all our hearts we must exercise ourselves in loving him and learn by practice how to put this intention of doing all for love of him constantly into the actions of each day. This may be accomplished in three ways. First, by the habit of certain devotions. Next, by interesting ourselves in those things which most directly regard the honour and glory of God, for this interest arises from, and is proof of our love, and tends ever to augment it. Lastly, by keeping high ideals and a lofty standard before our eyes as an object at which we never cease to aim, though we may often lamentably fail in attaining it.

A seminarist should be trained in very special devotion to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love, whom he invokes so often, but frequently heedlessly, in the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*. If a conscious remembrance of the indwelling of the Third Person of the most Holy Trinity is of great import in the sanctification of any soul, it has a vastly greater

importance in the bringing to perfection of priests and of those who are called to the priesthood. By their baptism they are dedicated followers of Jesus Christ, children of God their Father, and members of his Church. In confirmation they have pledged themselves to more perfect following of Christ, and to be on God's side always. Their vocation is a drawing, an inspiration of the Divine Spirit, who will one day set them aside for ever from the rest of men by giving them his strength in the diaconate, and fitting them for the ministry of reconciliation in the priesthood. All these gifts are realities, and they have but to turn to that Divine Guest, ever dwelling in the tabernacle of their consecrated souls, to obtain from him the flower and fruit of the seeds of love which he has so lavishly planted within them.

The next important devotion in the search after love is that to their Master, true God and true man, present in the Blessed Sacrament. The boys of the present day have an inestimable advantage over their elders in that they have been admitted in their earliest childhood to communion with their Lord and best friend, and to constant sacramental intercourse with him ever since. This should make their love much easier as they grow up. After nothing should they strive more earnestly than a very close, intimate, personal love of Jesus Christ. They are to be his representatives one day; and now, already, they have constant opportunities of making known to him all their thoughts and desires. Mass follows

closely on, and should be a prolongation of their morning mental prayer. Holy Communion, "to please him," as said so wonderfully St Teresa of Lisieux, rather than to please themselves, and received with such care as may really please him, is practically a daily event of their lives. Throughout the day there are untold chances of turning their thoughts to him, or of actually kneeling before his dwelling-place. He is not far from any one of us. He ought not to be long absent from our thoughts. Little by little he will become our most familiar and our wholly trusted friend. This devotion is a very sure test of the reality of a vocation to the priesthood. If in the case of a boy living at home and attending a day-school it holds its due place in his daily life, if in the case of a boy at a boarding-school it is well maintained in holiday time, the vocation is almost secure. If it be wanting in the first case, or languishes in the second, there is serious ground for doubt. If an aspirant to the priesthood has not a real attraction of love for his Divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, he is not likely to be an earnest or zealous priest.

There is no true love for our Lord in the heart of a Catholic unless it includes a real reverence and affection for her who bore him. "Son, behold thy mother." Our blessed Lady is the mother in the spiritual order of all the redeemed, but among them who can claim her protection with greater confidence than those upon whom her Son has bestowed a desire to receive his

Eternal Priesthood? She is *Regina Cleri*—that is, of all those chosen, set apart, and consecrated for the salvation of souls, for whose saving she saw her Son hanging and dying on the Cross. There is no vocation to the priesthood in which Mary has not had a part, none which has come to maturity which she has not protected, none which can be true and fruitful unless it be very specially consecrated to her. She is *mater pulchrae dilectionis*, who will teach strong, burning love of her Son to all who constantly ask that gift from her. Her first instruction: "Whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye," should be ever in the minds of those who desire to become priests. If these words be heeded, they will be, by her intercession, a source of many wonders, as they were when they were first uttered in Cana of Galilee.

Next, a seminarist may acquire and show his love for God by a real and growing knowledge and appreciation of everything which interests his honour and service. The sacred liturgy and chant; the doings of the Church at home and abroad; the progress of religion and of ecclesiastical enterprises, foreign missions, the history of the Church, the lives of the saints—all such things should claim his attention in proportion to his age and mental development and activity. If he be little concerned about them, and does not respond to endeavours to arouse his care for them, he is not likely to be much influenced by them in his priestly life. *Omnes quaerunt quae sua sunt, non quae Jesu Christi.* It is not a hopeful

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sign. Where such interest is strong and growing we may look forward to a fruitful, earnest priesthood.

Lastly, high ideals and a lofty standard should ever be kept before the student. He is to be an athlete in God's service, and must be trained as such, and it is especially in this element of training that the school life of an aspirant to the priesthood differs essentially from that of an ordinary school-boy. He must be trained in everything by the appeal to conscience, and not by the introduction of sanctions of a lower order which are quite legitimate in dealing with other boys. If a high standard is reasonably and consistently placed before him, he will strive after it. If lower motives are substituted, he will sink to their level. It should be remembered that he is preparing for a life in which, as I have already shown, practically his only law and safeguard will be his conscience acting in response to the motive of the love of God. From the moment that there is solid ground to believe that a boy is called to the priesthood, and desires to follow that calling, he has a right to be trusted as one who will obey conscience, and it is a duty of superiors to treat him on that footing. Thus there will be ample room and place for admonition, reproof, correction, but not for punishment in the ordinary sense.[1] Work insufficiently prepared for class

[1] It seems needless to say that in a junior seminary there is no place for English time-honoured methods of corporal punishment. A boy can hardly be regarded seriously as an aspirant if he needs such correction—his place is clearly elsewhere.

must be repeated and learned accurately. This, in the case of a clever lad who has idled when he might easily have done his task, becomes a punishment; while for his duller companion, who has done his best and failed, it is, perhaps, a painful humiliation and trial, but ought not to be regarded by him or by anyone else as an inflicted penalty. So in other cases it should be recognized that a boy who sincerely desires to be a priest, and has taken active steps for that purpose by going to school, or college, or seminary, is reasonable and will do this duty because it is his duty and for the love of God. Whatever other motives may be involved, this supreme one must underlie them all, and must never be obscured by any other. In a last resort the old adage may be quoted: *Aut disce aut discede.* But the other choice, *Manet sors tertia caedi,* has no application here.

Conscience must be very active in a priest's life if he is to live up to all his obligations and sanctify himself and his flock. His boyhood and his youth must, by God's grace, become very sensitive to the same supreme appeal.

In conclusion, I would say a word on the question of giving prizes and distinctions to students of philosophy or theology. Apart from academic degrees, which may be legitimately sought, I would personally have none of such things. They seem to me as incongruous, as would be a good conduct prize for such students; for it should be assumed that they will do their

best. So, too, with the publication of classified examination results. I dislike them, for they seem to be based on a motive for work which were more profitably excluded. The system which I saw in use at the Séminaire de S Sulpice appears to me far wiser. There the examination results were communicated to each student's Ordinary for his information and guidance, together with a report on health, conduct, etc. The same information was given to all the priests engaged in the work of the seminary, and the student could obtain it either from the superior or from his own spiritual director. Thus it was kept in close relation with his own conscience, and not communicated to anyone else. In like manner the deferring of promotion to orders was never made public. Only the student himself knew whether his advance was postponed at his own wish, or because his superiors had found themselves unwilling or unable to promote him. This delicate respect for conscience, as the great motive of action, with the safeguarding of reputation which it ensured, seemed to me in every way admirable. I would gladly see the same methods universally adopted.

CHAPTER X

THE TRAINING AFFORDED BY THE DAILY LIFE OF A STUDENT

WHEN a student enters a seminary he finds himself surrounded by many rules and regulations, restrictions unknown to him in his own home. What is the meaning and purpose of them ?

In every community where people live together, whether in a family, or a club, or a college, there must be rules of some kind, tacitly or expressly accepted, in order that there may be order, peace, and harmony. A student, therefore, who of his own free will enters a place of preparation for the priesthood thereby accepts the regulations of such an establishment, and quite apart from any supernatural motive is bound, in natural honour and courtesy, to observe them. To disregard them deliberately, still more to set them at defiance in mere school-boy fashion when he can do so without impunity, would show that his proper place is clearly elsewhere and not in a seminary.

There is another reason for rules and regulations, based again on natural motives with its counterpart in many other callings or professions. A definite way of life needs certain well-formed habits by which a man comes to be guided almost instinctively even in moments of unexpected stress and difficulty. It is for this reason that

so long and minute a training, beginning in boyhood, is given to the naval man; and a course of exercise and instruction, not so long, but equally intensive, is imposed upon the soldier. Experience has shown that without such training and until a man has acquired certain habits of mind and will, he cannot be fully depended upon in an emergency.

Every reason that can be adduced for the special training for men entering on other careers has immensely more force when we consider the preparation of those who desire to enter the priesthood. The sacerdotal calling is of all conditions of life the most highly characterized, the most completely set apart; it stands alone by itself. It is a lifelong dedication of the whole man to the special service of God, a service in which a man can never be *off duty*. He is a priest for ever, and must so show himself in every moment and in every crisis of his life. Inevitably he will be exposed to very great and unexpected shocks in which, unless priestly habit has wholly entered into his very being, he may easily be thrown off his balance, and suffer harm himself, or do harm to others or to his Master's cause. He needs, therefore, a long, minute, penetrating training, and for this the Church has made divinely inspired provision. The main rules of her seminaries are the same everywhere, and they present themselves to the student with the highest possible sanctions, endorsed by the authority of the whole Church, and imposed upon him by his

Bishop, his own immediate father in God. It is not possible to find anywhere or in any state of life rules more holy or more worthy of respect and observance, and it is upon the authority of these rules that the more minute directions and arrangements of immediate superiors are based. No student is worthy of admission to the priesthood who fails to understand the underlying principles and the importance of the rules of a seminary. I have known some young men who have entered a seminary not hesitating to say that their only purpose was to study certain subjects and to pass necessary examinations. As for training, they declared that they felt no need of any. Particularly in the case of converts from a non-Catholic ministry, there is sometimes an impression that they are quite sufficiently trained already, so far as their character is concerned. This is very rarely the case. They may be earnest and devout men, but almost always they are strongly attached to their own personal view and to their own will. They have never learnt adequately how to obey, or to sacrifice their own wishes in the search after a higher good at the call of duty. If they are ordained, they will be prepared to perform acts of heroism if the work be of their own seeking. They will refuse a very simple service if it be not entirely to their liking. For a man to say that he is fully trained, and needs no further training, is an infallible sign that he needs training very much indeed, above all in humility and self-diffidence.

A futile and somewhat foolish question is not infrequently asked: "Do the rules of a seminary bind under sin?" It is a futile question, because a man who is going to be a priest must realize that the guidance of his life cannot be safely conducted on distinctions between what is absolutely sinful or non-sinful. Such an attitude of mind is essentially non-priestly. It is a foolish question, because such rules clearly constitute the duties of a seminarist's state of life, and outside the duties of one's state of life sanctification is impossible, whatever else a man may accomplish. To withdraw oneself deliberately from the action of the rules which the Church has laid down for the state of life that a man has deliberately accepted, cannot be pleasing to God. Again, such an attitude should counsel a student to seek another career unless he is prepared to recognize its folly and abandon it.

Having seen the purpose and binding force of the rules and regulations of seminary life, we may now glance at their details, and so realize better how they are intended to attain that purpose.

They are meant to form men to prompt and ready obedience, especially in matters which cost them a good deal. To rise promptly at a fairly early hour; to be ready for definite duties, whether of prayer, study, or meals, punctually; to devote attention to subjects of study, for some, at least, of which there is no natural attraction; to observe minute rules of dress, to keep silence at certain times; to ask permission for exemptions, and the

like—these things conscientiously carried out render a man capable of accomplishing work efficiently, either as a subordinate or as holding authority, in matters where an untrained man would fail lamentably. Habits of will and of prompt acquiescence to duty, even when nature rebels, will carry a priest over many a difficult obstacle.

Again, to live day by day with other boys or men of different ages and habits, with varying social antecedents, and individual characters more or less mutually attractive; to practise kindness, forbearance, consideration in such surroundings; to build up on a supernatural foundation the great natural virtues of honour, truthfulness, courtesy, correcting and overcoming any shortcomings that may be self-perceived or pointed out in these matters of extreme importance—herein is another far-reaching field of training invaluable to the future priest. Lastly, there is in these rules the immense power of united prayer. The common spiritual exercises of a seminary, the exhortations at conferences or at spiritual reading (of which I will speak in the concluding chapter), the retreats, the successive ordinations—only God can tell, only eternity will show the immense formative influences which flow therefrom, and the enormous power which they exert, if used faithfully and conscientiously, in building up in the heart of each individual aspirant the union with God which is the great ultimate purpose of every seminary.

Very clearly, then, rules and regulations, loyally accepted and conscientiously obeyed, are fundamental in the preparation of an aspirant to the priesthood.

CHAPTER XI

A CONCLUDING SUMMARY

I HAVE endeavoured to show that a call to the priesthood carries with it an obligation to real perfection of life; that the means of attaining this perfection must be taught, both theoretically and practically, from the moment that the aspirant, whatever his age may be, determines to answer the call which he believes himself to have received; that this teaching and learning are the real object, the *finis primarius et ultimus* of every seminary, all other purposes being secondary and subsidiary to this.

It remains now to say a few words on those who are God's specially chosen instruments in accomplishing this great purpose.

They are, in the first place, the priests to whom the government or direction and the teaching of the seminary have been entrusted by the competent ecclesiastical authority. They cannot value too highly the importance and the responsibility of the work confined to them. No greater mark of confidence can be given by a Bishop to a priest than his selection for this work. Only to the best should the training of students for the priesthood be entrusted. The priests so chosen, should ever remember that it is not their learning, but their character, their daily example, their priestly lives which will have the most

powerful influence upon the ideals and aspirations of the students for whom they are responsible to God and to the Church. Their life must be one of considerable self-sacrifice, for to do their duty they must share very closely the daily life of the students, being with them for many of the spiritual exercises, having meals with them, ready to receive them when they need advice, not holding themselves aloof in time of recreation. "Have they made thee ruler? be not lifted up: be among them as one of them: have care of them." In term time only grave reasons justify their absence from the seminary. If they go away even for spiritual ministries on Sundays or feast days when they have no lectures to deliver, they are failing in their primary duty; for such absences lead students instinctively to feel that the seminary is not the chief but only a secondary interest in their minds. Moreover, it is just those free days which afford opportunity for wider reading, and for the greater leisure on which students have a claim for spiritual guidance and direction. As I said in a previous chapter, there should be always resident in a seminary a sufficient number of priests to provide for these important spiritual needs. The craving after a more active ministry, so natural in a zealous priest, must find satisfaction in holiday time. To many men change of work, in moderation, is more useful and really recreating than a completely inactive holiday. But throughout ready self-sacrifice is the mark of a priest to whom

the training of other priests can be safely entrusted.

If, after more than two hundred years, "les Messieurs de S Sulpice" still exercise so wonderful an influence on their alumni, holding their veneration and affection in all their after-lives, it is precisely because the latter see in them true examples and models of priestly life. They make no pretence of being more than priests; they find in their priesthood the source and reason of holiness of life. Their lives are simple; they are unassuming, and without exaggeration in the simplicity of the furniture of their rooms and of their other surroundings. They are content with a small stipend. They lead the lives of their students, and are ever at their disposition in any matter in which they can be of service to them. By being true priests they lead their students to an efficacious desire to become like them. As in the days of Fénelon there is still "nothing more venerable or more apostolic than S Sulpice." But there is no reason why the priesthood should not bring forth the same fruits in all those who are entrusted with the management of seminaries; no reason why it should not produce equal results in the students under their care.

Among the priests who share the work of the seminary the superior holds a place apart. On him rests the chief government of the house; his character and personality are the determining factors in its ruling. All that has been said of the other priests applies with special force to him.

He must be the *forma gregis.* I do not see how he can efficiently or adequately discharge his important duties unless he has the means of influencing his community which is afforded by the exercise termed the "lecture spirituelle," as understood and practised in the seminaries under the care of the priests of S Sulpice, and in many others. Monsignor Dupanloup, in his remarkable works on education, says, indeed, that he cannot conceive any house of education being effectively managed without the "lecture spirituelle" or its equivalent. The Venerable Don Bosco also attached great importance to a similar means of influence. I will explain in what it consists.

Every evening, except on Sundays and feast days when there has been a sermon, the community of the seminary (senior and junior; or of theology or philosophy, if they be separated) assembles before the evening meal under the presidency of the superior of the house (of the superior of the section of the house if there be separate sections). The meeting is not held in the chapel, but in a lecture-room, generally known as the "salle des exercices." As the object is a more or less familiar talk, rather than a formal spiritual conference, there can be greater freedom in the mode of address than would be suitable in a chapel. At Wonersh we called the room so employed "Conference Room," and it was used also for lectures and other purposes. The "spiritual reading" begins and ends with the usual prayers. In a senior seminary it lasts half an hour; in a junior

seminary a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes are sufficient. The superior makes use primarily of this opportunity to give notices of coming events, alterations in hours, or subjects of classes or lectures. He calls attention to laxity in observance in points of rule, thus avoiding in most cases any need for individual correction. At the proper times he gives the general result of the examinations, stating the number of those who have attained various ratios of marks, without, of course, alluding to any individual. The criticism of sermons already publicly delivered is made at the same time. On the eve of great festivals an exhortation is given in preparation for the fitting celebration of the feast. In this way he comes into close daily contact with the life of his community. The matters just alluded to are of an incidental and transitory character. But there is a more continuous purpose.

When the above subjects either do not arise or have been dealt with, the spiritual reading is devoted to its main object. At the beginning of the scholastic year the rule of the seminary is explained in detail with the reasons and motives which underlie it. Out of this explanation come forth naturally careful instruction on mental prayer, spiritual reading, methods of study—in fact, on every occupation of a student's day. This explanation, with commentary, of the rule may take a couple of months. When it is completed, the spiritual reading for the remainder of the year is, in the case of senior students, divided

into two parts. One part is devoted to ascetical theology, with special application to the students themselves; the other is given to some branch of pastoral work in preparation for their future ministry. Thus during their course all receive adequate instruction in both ascetical and pastoral theology, given in a way that really goes home. Usually the superior speaks for most if not for the whole of the time. In the case of an earnest, capable and experienced man, who has carefully thought out and prepared what he has to say, the influence of spiritual reading so understood is incalculable. I know of no other way in which a superior can really make himself, as he should be, the guiding spirit of his community. A book is always held in reserve, treating of the subject upon which the superior is commenting, so that he may call upon a student to read from it, if and when he does not wish to speak himself. But it is only on very rare occasions that he would fail to use at least a few spoken words in order to drive home the subject which is under consideration, and thus maintain his community in unity and earnestness. Anyone who has seen this "lecture spirituelle" in daily active use will agree that there is no system of conferences or the like which can adequately take its place, for its efficacy lies very largely in its simplicity, freedom, and elasticity.

Indirectly all the priests with whom an ecclesiastical student comes in contact, whether at home or elsewhere in vacation time, and especially the priests of his own diocese, are intended by

God to be instruments of his sanctification. Would that they always understood and remembered this! If students see priests whose lives and conversation are in accordance with the standards taught in the seminary, that teaching will thereby receive valuable endorsement. If, on the other hand, the priests whom they meet are careless and disedifying, much harm may be done. Still more will harm be done, very likely of a lasting character, if priests speak to the students in a way that seems to call in question the spiritual teaching of the seminary, either by directly contradicting it or by suggesting that such ideals are impossible of attainment. Some priests are gravely culpable in this matter. By their frivolous, worldly, critical, cynical, and occasionally even scurrilous language (forgetful of the precept *nec nominentur in vobis sicut decet sanctos*) they may do incalculable injury to youths and young men who are looking forward to becoming priests. *Vae sacerdoti per quem scandalum venit.* If they have lost high ideals themselves, why endeavour thus to destroy them in others? They will have a very heavy account to render for the mischief which they cause in this way to the interests of the Church.

Parish priests have special duties both of watchfulness and of kind consideration towards seminarists who spend vacation time in their parishes. They should make them welcome to Church, sacristy, sanctuary, and presbytery. Especially should they allow easy access to the

presbytery to those who, owing to their family circumstances, cannot, as they grow older, find at home the privacy which they need. In their watchfulness they must remember that should they notice in a student any indication, whether of act or of default, either that his vocation is uncertain or that he is not living up to it, they are strictly bound in conscience to make such matter known to the competent ecclesiastical authority. The very solemn appeal uttered by a bishop before he proceeds to the ordination of deacons and priests is manifestly addressed to the parish priests of candidates, though not to them exclusively.

Before the Diaconate.

Scis illos dignos esse ?

Quantum humana fragilitas nosse sinit, et scio, et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.

Deo gratias.

Auxiliante Domino Deo, et Salvatore nostro Jesu Christo, eligimus hos praesentes Subdiaconos in ordinem Diaconii. Si quis habet aliquid contra illos, pro Deo, et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat, et dicat; verumtamen memor sit conditionis suae.

Again before the Priesthood.

Scis illos esse dignos ?

Quantum humana fragilitas nosse sinit, et scio, et testificor ipsos dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.

Deo gratias.

Horum siquidem Diaconorum in Presbyteros, auxiliante Domino, ordinandorum conversatio (quantum mihi videtur) probata, et Deo placita existit, et digna (ut arbitror) Ecclesiastici honoris augmento. Sed ne unum fortasse, vel paucos, aut decipiat assensio, vel fallat affectio, sententia est expetenda multorum. Itaque quid de eorum actibus aut moribus noveritis, quid de merito sentiatis, libera voce pandatis; et his testimonium Sacerdotii magis pro merito, quam affectione aliqua, tribuatis. Si quis igitur habet aliquid contra illos, pro Deo, et propter Deum, cum fiducia exeat, et dicat; verumtamen memor sit conditionis suae.

I COMMEND the end of this little treatise, as I dedicated its beginning, to the sorrowful and immaculate heart of Mary, praying that most dear Mother ever to guard those who by their vocation to the priesthood are in a twofold sense her sons, and to keep them always with her at the foot of the Cross of her Divine Son, thence to draw strength, consolation, and salvation for the souls to whose ministry they are called to dedicate themselves.

APPENDICES

IN order to complete and illustrate the subject of this treatise I add several matters bearing directly upon it. The first is the too little remembered Decree of Cardinal Pole, the forerunner of the subsequent decree of Trent. In it is found the first use, so far as I can ascertain, of the word *seminary* in its true ecclesiastical sense, a word and a sense surely to be cherished, maintained, and venerated by us in England on account of the great Englishman who first conceived them. Next I have placed the two decrees of the Council of Trent never to be forgotten by those who have to do with the training of the clergy. Then comes an extract from Cardinal Newman's Chapter (XX in Volume III of *Historical Sketches*) on " Universities and Seminaries." Lastly, I have thought well to reprint my sermon at the Jubilee Mass of St John's Seminary, Wonersh, and my paper on the reorganization of St Edmund's College, together with the allocution delivered to my clergy at the Diocesan Synod held in 1925.

I

REFORMATIO ANGLIAE, EX DECRETIS REGINALDI POLI CARDINALIS, SEDIS APOSTOLICAE LEGATI, ANNO MDLVI. ROMAE, MDLXII. APUD PAULUM MANUTIUM ALDI. F.

Decretum XI

UT IN CATHEDRALIBUS CERTUS INITIATORUM NUMERUS EDUCETUR, EX QUO, TANQUAM EX SEMINARIO, ELIGI POSSINT, QUI DIGNE ECCLESIIS PRAEFICIANTUR.

Cum magna sit hoc tempore ecclesiasticarum personarum penuria, praesertim idonearum, quae Ecclesiis, seu ecclesiasticis muneribus vel praeficiatur, vel inserviat; atque huic incommodo nulla ratione magis occurri possit, quam si soboles quaedam, et tanquam seminarium ministrorum saltem in cathedralibus Ecclesiis instituatur, et conservetur; hac eadem Synodo approbante statuimus et decernimus, ut singulae metropolitanae, et cathedrales huius regni Ecclesiae, pro cuiusque censu, et facultatibus, proq; diocesis amplitudine certum numerum puerorum alere teneantur.

In hoc vero qui cooptandi erunt, annos sint minimum undecim, vel duodecim nati, qui et legere sciant, et scribere; et quorum indoles, ac voluntas certiorem spem afferat, eos Sacerdotes futuros, et ecclesiasticis muneribus perpetuo inservituros.

Pauperum autem filios praecipue eligi volumus, neque tamen ditiorum excludimus, modo studium praeseferant Deo et Ecclesiae inserviendi. Hi primam grammaticam discant: post, in ipsam metropolitanam, sive cathedralem Ecclesiam adsciti, sub cancellario Ecclesiae, aut alio docto, et gravi viro, qui ad hoc munus dilectus sit, in ecclesiastica doctrina, et disciplina erudiantur. Horum classes instituentur

duae, altera provectiorum aetate, et litteris, quos Acolytos esse volumus, quibus, praeter victum, et togam, quam liberalem vocant, mercedis etiam aliquid in singulos annos attribuetur: altera juniorum, quibus toga, et mensa tantum dabitur. Universi autem tam prioris classis, quam posterioris tonsura, et habitu clericali, eadem vivendi ratione utentur et divinis in Ecclesia officiis opportune inservient. Porro ex Acolytorum classe quicunque ad aetatem legitimam pervenerint, et in moribus atque in litteris profecerint, Sacris ordinibus initiabuntur, et ipsi cathedrali, seu metropolitanae Ecclesiae, in quocumque ministerio Episcopo et Capitulo commodum videbitur, operam suam navabunt: atque his ut pro cuiusque merito beneficium aliquod ecclesiasticum deferatur, ipse Episcopus et Capitulum curabit. In eorum autem locum, qui ex Acolytorum classe ad ordines Sacros, et maiora Ecclesiae munera adsciscentur, substituendi erunt, qui ex classe inferiori moribus, aetate, ac litteris proxime accedant. Ad scholam grammaticae, et alia commoda, discendi causa, admittantur alii etiam civitatis et diocesis pueri: qui tamen sint honeste educati, et bonis moribus praediti: quibus eodem vestitu, quo ceteris, qui ab Ecclesia alentur, utendum erit, atque eodem modo vivendum. Ex his autem, qui maxime idoneus erit, et Ecclesiae inserviendi voluntate praeseferet, in eius locum sufficietur, qui ex clericorum numero desiderabitur. Et quia, ad hanc puerorum sobolem alendam, necesse est, ut, quoad certa dos ex reditibus beneficiorum, quae deinceps vacaverint, huic tam pio operi in perpetuum assignandorum, seu quo alio modo erit constituta, quod brevi factum iri speramus, census aliquis annuus ad tempus provideatur, qui tam puerorum victui, quam praeceptorum stipendiis sufficere possit; statuimus, ut Archiepiscopi et Episcopi omnes fructuum annuorum, quos ex proventibus Episcopatuum suorum percipiunt, deductis decimis,

subsidiis et feudis, quadragesimam partem cum ad ipsos pueros alendos, tum etiam ad mercedem solvendam magistris, qui eos in grammatica, et ecclesiastica doctrina et disciplina erudient, in singulos annos pendant. Quod item ab omnibus, qui praebendas, vel beneficia quaecumque ecclesiastica aut iam obtinent, aut post hac obtinebunt, fieri volumus, ac iubemus, ut scilicet ex fructibus beneficiorum suorum, quae vel singulo, vel plura simul, decimis, subsidiis et feudis, ut praefertur, deductis, ad annuum censum viginti librarum ascendant, partem quadragesimam ad hos ipsos usus in ea dioecesi, in qua beneficia obtinent, quotannis persolvant. Id quod eos, licet aliis multis oneribus gravatos, pro sua tamen erga Deum pietate, et in eius Ecclesiam, quae nunc ministrorum idoneorum penuria magnopere deformatur, officio et studio haud gravatim facturos esse confidimus. Praeterea statuimus ut Episcopus simul cum Decano, et capitulo Cathedralis Ecclesiae huius puerorum scholae curam gerant; certisque hominibus negotium dent, ut hunc censum ab omnibus iis, qui solvere tenebuntur, in terminis et locis, ac sub censuris, et poenis, eorundem Episcopi, et Capituli arbitrio statuendis, exigant. Reliqua vero, quae ad hanc scholam bene ac feliciter administrandam, tuendamque erunt statuenda, quae multa adhuc restant, in proxima convocatione, Deo favente, providebuntur.

Cum autem ad sanam doctrinam, et bonos mores conservandos maxime conducat, ut erudiendae iuventuti magistri rectitudine fidei, honestate vitae, et eruditione commendabiles praeficiantur: idcirco statuimus, ut ne quis ulli scholae in quocunque loco magister praeficiatur, aut quo modo libet munus docendi suscipiat, nisi prius a loci Ordinario diligenter examinatus, ac probatus fuerit deque in libris admonitus, qui in Scholis tam ad eruditionem, quam ad excolendos iuventutis mores legendi sunt. Qui vero

huic decreto non paruerit, sententiam excommunicationis incurrat, et munere docendi ad triennium prohibeatur. Eorum autem, qui iam scholis praefecti sint, fides, mores, et doctrina sedulo examinentur; et si tales reperti fuerint, quales in praesenti constitutione requirimus, confirmentur, et de omnibus supradictis admoneantur: sin aliter, eos amoveri, et in eorum locum alios idoneos suffici mandamus.

(These notes are compiled by the Reverend Francis Day, who kindly transcribed the above decree.)

General Notes concerning "Reformatio Angliae," etc., by Cardinal Pole.

The above is a small work of twenty-seven pages, written by Cardinal Pole and published in Rome in A.D. 1562.

It contains the twelve decrees of a synod held at Lambeth in 1556, which was concerned with the details of the restoration of Catholic Faith and Discipline in England. The decrees are prefaced by an introductory section addressed to Queen Mary and King Philip of Spain, and explaining the circumstances which led to the promulgation of the decrees.

The book is extremely rare, and is usually bound up with two other works of the Cardinal—viz., *De Concilio* (which treats of the work of the Council of Trent), and *De Baptismo Constantini.*

The following are the titles of the twelve decrees:

DECRETA.

I. De gratiis Deo pro reditu huius regni ad Ecclesiae unitatem in Missarum celebratione quotidie agendis, deque eius rei memoria quotannis celebranda.

II. De constitutionibus, et dogmatibus, librisq; recipiendis, reiciendisque, et ut ius canonicum publice doceatur.

III. De residentia Episcoporum, aliorum inferioris ordinis clericorum et scholarium, collegiorumque praefectorum.

IV. Ut Episcopi, reliquiq; curam animarum exercentes populo praedicent, parochi pueros prima fidei rudimenta doceant.

V. De vita et honestate clericorum.

VI. De ecclesiasticorum ordinum collatione, et examinatione ordinandorum.

VII. De ecclesiasticorum beneficiorum provisione.

VIII. Ne concessiones iuris praesentandi, seu advocationum fiant, neque in quempiam facultates disponendi de beneficiis contra sacrorum canonum dispositionem transferantur.

IX. De Simonia.

X. De rebus ecclesiae non alienandis, et bonorum inventario conficiendo, et officiis ecclesiasticis non locandis.

XI. Ut in cathedralibus certus initiatorum numerus educetur, ex quo, tanquam ex seminario, eligi possint, qui digne Ecclesiis praeficiantur.

XII. De visitatione Ecclesiarum.

II

DECREES OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Sic decet omnino clericos in sortem Domini vocatos, vitam moresque suos omnes componere, ut habitu, gestu, incessu, sermone aliisque omnibus rebus nil nisi grave, moderatum ac religione plenum prae se ferant, levia etiam delicta, quae in ipsis maxima essent, effugiant, ut eorum actiones cunctis afferant venerationem (Sessio XXII, Caput I).

Cum adolescentiam aetas, nisi recte instituatur, prona sit ad mundi voluptates sequendas; et nisi a teneris annis ad pietatem et religionem informetur, antequam vitiorum habitus totos homines possideat, nunquam perfecte, ac sine maximo ac singularis propemodum Dei omnipotentis auxilio, in disciplina ecclesiastica perseveret: sancta Synodus statuit ut

singulae cathedrales, metropolitanae atque his majores ecclesiae, pro modo facultatum et dioecesis amplitudine, certum puerorum ipsius civitatis, et dioecesis, vel ejus provinciae, si ibi non reperiantur, numerum in collegio ad hoc prope ipsas ecclesias, vel alio in loco convenienti ab episcopo eligendo, alere, ac religiose educare, et ecclesiasticis disciplinis instituere teneantur. In hoc vero collegio recipiantur, qui ad minimum duodecim annos, et ex legitimo matrimonio nati sint, ac legere et scribere competenter noverint, et quorum indoles et voluntas spem afferat eos ecclesiasticis ministeriis perpetuo inservituros (Sessio XXIII, Caput XVIII).

III

UNIVERSITIES AND SEMINARIES: L'ECOLE DES HAUTES ETUDES

By CARDINAL NEWMAN

(From *Historical Sketches*, vol. iii, ch. xx)

No two institutions are more distinct from each other in character than Universities and Seminaries; and their very difference might seem a pledge that they would not come into collision with each other. Seminaries are for the education of clergy, Universities for the education of laymen. They are for separate purposes, and they act in separate spheres; yet such is human infirmity, perhaps they ever will be rivals in their actual working. So at least it has been in past time. Universities grew out of the Episcopal Schools; and then, as time went on, they returned evil for good, and gradually broke the strength, and drained away the life of the institution which had given them birth—an institution, too, which was of far more

importance to the Church than themselves. Universities are ornaments—indeed, the bulwarks to Religion; but Seminaries are essential to its purity and efficiency. It is plain, then, if the action and interests of the two institutions have conflicted, which side the Church would take in the quarrel. She would side for the injured party, against the aggressor; for the party more important to her, against the party less so. Universities, then, for a long season have been sustaining the punishment of past ambition; and it seems hardly right to close this survey of them without saying a few words about them under this aspect.

As Seminaries are so necessary to the Church, they are one of her earliest appointments. Scarcely had the New Dispensation opened when, following the example of the Schools of the Temple and of the Prophets under the Old, St John is recorded, over and above the public assemblies of the faithful, to have had about him a number of students whom he familiarly instructed; and, as time went, and power was given to the Church, this School for ecclesiastical learning was placed under the roof of the Bishop. In Rome especially, where we look for the pattern to which other churches are to be conformed, the clergy, not of the city only, but of the provinces, were brought under the immediate eye of the Pope. The Lateran Church, his first Cathedral, had a Seminary attached to it, which remained there till the pontificate of Leo the Tenth, when it was transferred into the heart of the city. The students entered within its walls from the earliest childhood; but they were not raised from minor orders till the age of twenty, nor did they reach the priesthood till after the trial of many years. Strict as a monastic noviciate, it nevertheless included polite literature in its course; and a library was attached to it for the use of seminarists. Here was educated, about the year 310, St Eusebius, afterwards in Arian times the celebrated Bishop of Vercellae; and in the

dark age that followed, it was the home from childhood of some of the greatest Popes—St Gregory the Second, St Paul the First, St Leo the Third, St Paschal, and St Nicholas the First. This venerable Seminary, called anciently the School of the Pontifical Palace, has never failed. Even when the barbarians were wasting the face of Italy, and destroying its accumulations of literature, the great Council of Rome, under Pope Agatho, as I mentioned above, could testify, not indeed to the theological science of the school in that miserable age, but to its faithful preservation of the unbroken teaching of revealed truth and of the traditions of the Fathers. In the thirteenth century we find it in a flourishing condition, and St Thomas and Albertus Magnus lecturing in its halls.

Such a prerogative of perpetuity was not enjoyed elsewhere. Europe lay submerged under the waters of a deluge; and, when they receded, schools had to be refounded as well as churches. One of the principal results of Charlemagne's visit to Rome was the reform or revival of education, both secular and ecclesiastical; and on his return to the North he addressed his well-known letter on the subject to the chapters and monastic bodies through his Empire. Henceforth the Pope made Seminaries obligatory in every diocese: as to the laity, they attended the public Schools spoken of in a former chapter.

Seminaries, then, were long in possession before Universities were imagined; and Universities rose out of them. And, when Universities were established, in order to preserve the *equilibrium* between clerical and lay education, it was decreed, by the authority of the Canons, that secular learning should be studied in the Seminaries, and that each Cathedral should maintain masters for its teaching. It was foreseen that unless this was done, Universities would supply a higher and wider education than the Epis-

copal Schools; and that the clergy would either become inferior to the monks and the laity, or would be drawn within the precincts and influence of Universities.

The latter of these inconveniences actually took place. The lectures in the Universities, after all, were necessarily superior to those which a Seminary could furnish. Accordingly, the Colleges for ecclesiastical students were founded in their neighbourhood, and the Cathedral Schools fell in reputation, and were gradually deserted. The youths, who would have found their natural home there, sometimes entered the Colleges aforesaid, sometimes attended the Schools of the Regulars, sometimes lived in lodgings as other students. It is sufficient to refer to the Lives of the Medieval Saints for instances of ordination taking place from or at the Universities without Seminary training; take, for example, St Raymund, St John of Matha, St Thomas of Canterbury, St Edmund, St John Nepomucene, St Caietan, St Carlo, St Ignatius and his companions, or St Francis of Sales—men who lived in very various ages and countries, and some of whom had to repel the shameless assaults to which their defenceless condition, in the midst of great cities, exposed them. And thus it was that by the date of the Council of Trent Seminaries had all but ceased to exist; and the candidates for the Priesthood, who had any learning and any religious training, either gained it for themselves, as they could, amid the mixed concourse of a University, or as members of Colleges, which had themselves suffered materially in their discipline from University contact.

There would be danger to their faith and religious temper, as well as to their morals. In Universities, subjects of every sort were disputed publicly; and boys who ought to have been schooled at a Seminary in distrust of the intellect and modesty of speculation, were suffered to imbibe a critical, carping, curious spirit, most unbecoming in an ecclesiastic, on the

interpretation of difficulties of Scripture, or on the deepest questions of theology. And the state of things became still more grave, when Protestantism arose, and its adherents found means of introducing themselves into the Professorial chairs.

It must be recollected, too, that none but the more able, or more wealthy, or more pushing, could succeed in paying their way at a University. But the majority of ecclesiastics would be poor, and without any great energy or enterprise. These, in the decay of Seminaries, were thrown for education upon the parish schools, which were obviously unequal to the task.

Such was the state of things, to which the Council of Trent put an end. Episcopal Seminaries were restored, ecclesiastical Colleges in Universities suppressed.

IV

ADDRESS

AT THE SOLEMN MASS OF THANKSGIVING ON THE OCCASION OF THE JUBILEE CELEBRATION AT ST JOHN'S SEMINARY, WONERSH, SEPTEMBER 29, 1920

"You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and have appointed that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain."—JOHN XV 16.

MY LORD BISHOP, DEAR REV. BRETHREN, DEAR CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST,

We are gathered, in these two days of solemn commemoration, round the last resting-place of the Founder of the Seminary, to give thanks to God for the innumerable graces and blessings which have marked its history during the thirty-one years of its

existence, and to offer our grateful suffrages upon this altar for those who, having done their part upon earth, have been called to give the account of their stewardship. Founder, masters, former students, benefactors of every degree, whether still remembered by name or quite forgotten, all have their place in our remembrance at this altar, that God may bestow upon them with generous abundance the reward of their close association with this house.

In our thanksgiving we gather up the thought of many events, the due celebration of which was hindered or obscured by the protracted years of the recent war. I will mention but three, leaving reference to others, as I relate in fuller detail the origin and beginnings of the Seminary. The first Mass was said on August 4, 1889. We entered into formal possession of the permanent buildings here at Wonersh on September 8, 1891. This chapel was consecrated on May 4, 1896; so that, although the jubilee year of that event has already begun, we have not yet reached the actual date.

It will not, I think, be out of place to sketch briefly the way in which the Seminary came into existence. Immediately after the Fourth Provincial Council of Westminster, held at St Edmund's College in 1873—a Council which legislated at length on the question of Seminaries—the second Bishop of Southwark, James Danell, took in hand the gathering of funds for the foundation of a diocesan Seminary. At that time, nothing was contemplated but a Seminary in South London for students of theology, and possibly of philosophy as well. Before his death, in 1881, Bishop Danell had secured a property in Clapham Road, and considerable funds towards the adaptation of the existing and the erection of more permanent buildings. Later, during the episcopate of his successor, Bishop Coffin, it became clear that the property thus acquired had ceased to be suitable.

It was, therefore, sold, and the proceeds of the sale were reserved for similar purposes later on.

Bishop John Butt succeeded to the See of Southwark on June 26, 1885, and almost at once felt himself obliged to consider in what way he could make permanent provision for the training and education of the ecclesiastical students of his diocese. He found himself in control of considerable sums of money specifically allocated to this purpose, and with the quiet, calm deliberation that characterized him he came to certain very definite conclusions. First, that he would not build in London, but in the country; secondly, that he would not adapt any existing building to this new purpose, but build a Seminary from its very foundation, "a fundamentis erexit"; and, thirdly, that the studies should include a "school course," as well as the higher subjects of philosophy and theology. In the summer of 1888, the Bishop made his annual retreat at the Carthusian monastery at Parkminster. On the day of his departure, on his way to the station, he called at the presbytery at West Grinstead, where I was at that time the assistant priest. Just as he was leaving, he turned to me and said: "I have now made up my mind to begin a diocesan Seminary; pray a great deal about it." This was the first of many subsequent intimations that he contemplated calling me to some share in the important work that he had been gradually maturing in his mind. In the following year, in the month of July, I was making my own retreat at St Mary's, Clapham, when I received a note from the Bishop asking me to call upon him before I returned to West Grinstead. In that interview, he formally entrusted to me the work that he had so long had in contemplation. His plans were already fully thought out. When I asked him if he had chosen the patron of the Seminary, he answered without hesitation, "St John the Evangelist." As you will see from the Catholic

Directories of 1890 and 1891, the property at Henfield Place, which was rented for two years, was invariably and from the very beginning officially described at St John's Diocesan Seminary (temporary premises). The Bishop furthermore came to the conclusion that it would be unwise to gather together students from other colleges, and determined to build up, in this respect also, from the beginning. I entered into residence at Henfield Place on August 3, 1889, and said Mass there for the first time the following morning in the presence of three students. The other students of that first year, numbering sixteen in all, arrived before the end of the month. In the second year (1890–1891), they grew to twenty-four. In September, 1891, forty entered the permanent buildings at Wonersh, of which the foundation-stone had been laid by Bishop Butt in the spring of the previous year.

This is the briefest outline of the history of those early days, so full of sacred memories for those who took part in them. Some day no doubt a complete history will be written, for full records were kept of the whole of that period. What has been said is enough to mark the significance of the thanksgiving that we make to-day.

But if it be well to recall the material work that constituted the beginning of St John's Seminary, it is better still and more important to set forth the spiritual foundations, without which a structure of stone or brick would be of little worth in the sight of God.

All Seminaries in the Catholic Church necessarily have certain salient characteristics, and yet each one may have its own distinctive spirit and possess individual traditions. As I have said, Bishop Butt, in the light of his own experience as a student, as a priest and as a Bishop, had a very clear conception of what he desired to see in and to obtain from his

Seminary. Though with his usual kindly confidence he gave me a large discretion in matters of detail, for eight years, from 1889–1897, I had the immense advantage of knowing intimately what he really wished and of carrying out his wishes in constant consultation with him. Thus, without any idea of comparisons or contrasts, we may rightly dwell to-day upon the main features of the spirit and traditions of St John's Seminary, for they are the outcome of the thoughts that were uppermost in the mind of our Founder, the fourth Bishop of Southwark.

He was convinced, in the first place, that once a boy or a young man is fully persuaded that God destines him for the priesthood, he derives an enormous advantage from being placed in a school of special training for that purpose, rather than in a school where his life can with difficulty be differentiated from that of those who have no such high end in view. He desired an ecclesiastical student to regard his life not as that of an ordinary schoolboy. A place in his Seminary was to be given only to those who had the priestly career definitely in view. If that ideal were non-existent, lost, or even temporarily abandoned or obscured, he thought it better that a student should leave the Seminary either to pursue his studies elsewhere, or to take up some occupation. And this without reference to any serious fault, or the smallest reflection on a student's character or disposition.

Again he was persuaded that the highest possible standard of virtue, conduct, and attainment should be consistently and continuously kept before the minds of those who believe themselves to be called to the apostolic work of the secular priesthood. He could not understand how for any men, by whatsoever name they might be designated, could a higher standard be required than for those who are to stand daily at the altar and who may be called, as is almost inevitably

the case in England, to minister to the spiritual needs of the highest and the lowliest among their fellow-creatures.

With this end in view, even in the case of the youngest student, in matters of study, discipline or rule, appeal must be made to conscience rather than to any other motive; for, in the life of the secular priest, it is conscience, and practically conscience alone, that must be the safeguard and protection of his virtue and of his priestly life. Were this appeal to fail, or to meet with a feeble response, then clearly the career of a secular priest would be too hazardous an enterprise.

To build up a true understanding of all that a priest's life involves, its nature, its consolations, and its perils, he relied very greatly on the example of and the familiar intercourse of the students with those priests to whom he had entrusted the direction and teaching of his Seminary. "Have they made thee ruler? Be not lifted up: be among them *as one of them;* have care of them" (Ecclesiasticus xxxii 1 and 2). The Fourth Council of Westminster teaches the same hallowed doctrine: "It is greatly to be desired that, as Christ lived in the midst of his Apostles, so also should the rector of the Seminary, together with those to whom the teaching of the students is entrusted, live in common with the seminarists, and both by word and example instruct, correct, and console them" (Dec. ix 7). They are not simply schoolmasters, but rather elder brethren of that great priestly family to which, in desire at least, the aspirant to the priesthood already belongs. It is their main duty by advice, example, and guidance so to direct his steps that by the day of his ordination he may possess the strength of character and conscience that will be needed to enable him to sanctify his own soul and the souls of those who will be entrusted to his pastoral care. For this reason no external work, however

useful or important, must be allowed to divert their attention from their own special work of training priests. In no position was greater self-sacrifice to be expected, nowhere should there be a higher standard of priestly perfection and detachment. Their aim will ever be to keep the mind and endeavours of the seminarists fixed upon the figure of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, the one true model of the priest. They will strive to build up in their hearts a child-like trustful devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, who of all creatures has in her own life most perfectly set forth for our admiration and imitation the interior life of her Divine Son. This is a work transcending in importance all their other obligations and responsibilities, for it is the foundation of all the rest.

To make this fundamental work of the Seminary easier of accomplishment, much reliance was from the beginning placed upon that wonderful school of ascetical and mystical theology which grew up in the seventeenth century mainly in France, but intimately dependent upon the teaching of St Francis of Sales in Savoy, and of St Teresa in Spain. Its results were marvellous and far-reaching in those days in the spiritual revivification of the secular clergy. It has bequeathed to us a method of mental prayer which in most cases gives a definite trend to the spiritual character of the soul that bravely follows it, and renders greatly easier the close union with God that it is so necessary, and yet often so difficult, to maintain in the crowded, interrupted hours of the life of most secular priests. With all these objects in view there was constant insistence on the need of individual guidance for each student in accordance with his special character, needs, and disposition. Hence, too, the frequent and almost daily spiritual conferences for both junior and senior students.

These are the main principles which, under the guidance of Bishop Butt, were intended to animate

and to give life and purpose and meaning to the Seminary that he founded. Everyone who has gone forth to priestly work from these walls will, I believe, bear testimony that his ministry has been fruitful to himself and to others in proportion to his fidelity to these principles; in other words, to the extent of his own personal union of intimate friendship with his Divine Master. Looking back now after a space of thirty-one years, in the light of a then most unlikely and unforeseen experience, I personally can declare that I see nothing to change or modify in these fundamental things. Superiors and students will change as years pass on, buildings may be added to and improved, studies will be deepened and extended, but the true foundations, the essential spirit and traditions of this house, are those which we owe to our founder, and to his guidance during those early years.

To-day, dear reverend brethren and dear children in Jesus Christ, we have, as it seems to me, three duties to perform. The first is with full hearts to give thanks to our Divine Master for all the graces, protection, and blessings that in the course of so many years he has bestowed upon the Seminary as an institution, and upon each of us individually as a consequence of our association with it. Out of that thought will inevitably grow a second duty, one of heartfelt humble contrition for wasted opportunities, forgotten resolutions, want of trust in God, and failure to follow his inspirations, with the corresponding obligation of fresh earnestness in the realization of those early purposes which are recalled to us so vividly as we kneel before the altar of this chapel. Lastly, we have to beg with very grateful memory the Divine mercy and reward for all, both living and dead, who have had their part by work or gift in building up this place. Many we know, many more are unknown, but we endeavour to-day to discharge some part of the debt that we owe to them.

As we gather round the altar with so many thoughts of the past thronging our remembrance, there is one prayer that should unite us all, a prayer so often uttered in this house, which sets forth in a few full phrases the whole purpose of our priestly training, the only object of our priestly life. As the years go by, as we hasten, more quickly, perhaps, than we suspect, to the day of our last account, may that prayer be ever fulfilled more perfectly in every one of us. May our Divine Master really dwell in us by the intercession, protection, and example of his ever Blessed Mother, who has guided, strengthened, and preserved the unspeakable grace of our priestly vocation until this day.

O Jesu, vivens in Maria, veni et vive in famulis tuis, in spiritu sanctitatis tuae, in plenitudine virtutis tuae, in perfectione viarum tuarum, in veritate virtutum tuarum, in communione Mysteriorum tuorum; dominare omni adversae potestati in Spiritu tuo, ad gloriam Patris. Amen.

V

REORGANIZATION OF ST EDMUND'S COLLEGE

(Published in the *Westminster Cathedral Chronicle*, May, 1923)

The recent reorganization of St Edmund's College at Old Hall certainly marks a very important and decisive moment in the history of that school. I have been asked by some of my clergy to explain more in detail the history and precise nature of that remodelling for their own information, and for that of their lay friends who are interested in all that belongs to the education of Catholic boys. I very gladly endeavour to meet their wishes.

To understand St Edmund's College, its history and

development, we must have constantly in mind its twofold origin. It is at one and the same time the representative in the South of England of the venerable English College of Douai, first in date and dignity of all our post-Reformation foundations, indeed the forerunner of all the rest; and the continuation of the secondary school for boys founded by Bishop Challoner at Standon Lordships in 1749, and transferred by Bishop James Talbot, after a brief sojourn at Hare Street, to Old Hall Green in 1769.

The College at Douai was founded by Dr. William Allen distinctly and specifically as an Ecclesiastical Seminary for the training of candidates for the Priesthood. It has indeed the signal honour of being actually the first Seminary ever established as the outcome of the legislation of the Council of Trent, which had concluded its long and frequently interrupted sittings only five years before the foundation of Douai College. It is known that the great St Charles, justly regarded as the initiator of Seminaries, looked to Douai for guidance and inspiration as he set about the work always associated with his name. But from force of circumstances, and in the absence of any other shelter for them, Allen was obliged to admit to his College a limited number of students who were not thinking of entering Holy Orders. He admitted them indeed, but only on condition that they submitted themselves to the rules governing the College, which thus preserved untouched its purely ecclesiastical character. He subjected them to all the regulations of an ecclesiastical Seminary.

This, then, was the situation when, in the storm of the French Revolution, the seminarists of Douai were compelled to seek a new home, this time in their native land. Those who belonged to the South were made welcome by the Vicar Apostolic of the London District, Bishop Douglass, who, as he himself tells us, on November 16, 1793, set up the College ever since

known as the College of St Edmund, on whose feast-day it began to exist. It was avowedly a " substitute for Douai," but, in absorbing, it in no way destroyed the existing lay school on which it was grafted. The lay students were already in possession. Neither then nor since have they been ousted therefrom. They have, and they have always had, their rightful place in the School or College on Old Hall Green.

It is evident from the whole history of the College that this juxtaposition of two distinct institutions, with widely differing purposes, constituted for the Vicars Apostolic, and subsequently for the Archbishops of Westminster, a recurring problem met by varying and often changing solutions. Sometimes there were separate bounds and playrooms for the two categories of students. At other times they were united. At one period candidates for the Priesthood wore the cassock as their usual daily garb. The Divines were sometimes more, sometimes less, closely connected with the School. In 1869 Cardinal Manning thought it wise to bring all these senior students to London, thus detaching them completely from the College. It was not till 1903 that they began to return, and then to a life in the College detached from any connection with the School. Ultimately they came to have even their own separate refectory, and their present life stands quite apart from the School.

This state of perplexity, experiment, and consequent change arose of necessity from the circumstances of the case, for in dealing with this matter we can never forget or really evade the force of the famous decree of the Council of Trent. The Council prescribes that those who have conceived a real desire to become priests should have a separate and more specialized training, even in boyhood, to prepare them for that high calling. Sometimes it is said that that decree is not consistent with conditions in England and

therefore does not strictly apply to them. But it has been repeated over and over again by the Holy See without making or allowing any distinction of country.

Cardinal Allen was a typical Englishman, yet he had no hesitation in establishing the English College at Douai as a true ecclesiastical Seminary; the first, as we have said, to be set up in accordance with the decree of the Council of Trent. Again, the late Bishop John Butt was a typical Englishman. He was brought up at St Edmund's College, to which he remained always deeply attached; yet when the time came for him, as Bishop of Southwark, to establish a seminary in his own Diocese, he made it strictly a seminary in the sense of the Council of Trent, exclusively for aspirants to the ecclesiastical state. On this point he never hesitated.

My own views are well known. I made them known in a pamphlet in 1893, and the views therein expressed, when I was a young priest, have been strengthened and confirmed by my exceptional experience since then. They are indeed so well known that many imagined that, when I became Archbishop of Westminster, I would at once proceed to remodel St Edmund's College on the lines of St John's Seminary, Wonersh, and gradually exclude from it all lay students. Indeed, there were some who urged me to take this course, and were astonished that I did not follow their advice. I am glad to have this opportunity of stating that no such idea or purpose ever entered my mind. My duty was to await God's moment for his providential guidance to a safe conclusion. It has always been my principle that every institution should develop on the lines of its own traditions; and we have seen that St Edmund's College has a very special, very precious and in some ways a unique tradition.

There are—and I admit it most readily, having

lived at St Edmund's College both as a lay boy and as an ecclesiastical student—manifest advantages in the intercourse in boyhood between those who aspire to the priesthood and those who seek lay careers. Such acquaintances, on the one condition that they are continued and fostered in later youth and on into manhood, are undoubtedly in many cases the basis of solid and lasting sympathy and friendship between clergy and laity. Moreover, it is undoubtedly a great gain to the general cause of the Church that lay boys of the class who seek secondary education should find such training at the hands and under the direction of the secular clergy. This is true for many reasons; among others, because, if later on they conceive a desire to become priests, their thoughts may more readily turn towards the secular clergy than would be the case were they to be educated exclusively in schools directed by the Religious Orders. It is of the utmost importance to the well-being of the Church that, in her secular pastoral Priesthood, those who spring from every grade of society should be fully represented, so long as the homes from which they came are truly and solidly Catholic. Again, it is an enormous advantage to a boy, destined for life in the world, to grow up in living contact with a great ecclesiastical establishment—such as is constituted by the presence of those who are studying for the Priesthood—in the various stages from boyhood to manhood; and thus enjoy all those influences which are associated with the liturgy of the Catholic Church, the full presentation of which on the festivals of the year is found in all its splendour in a great college chapel. All these things being granted, it is no less certain that on educational grounds, for psychological reasons, and in view of the constant teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church, there is an essential difference in discipline, in training and, above all, in the more intimate things of the spiritual life,

between the preparation of a boy for the service of the Altar and the fitting of him for a career in the world.

The problem then was this: how to conciliate the requirements of Trent, affecting the aspirants to the Priesthood, with the needs of the other students who, with equal rights, are students of St Edmund's College, so that neither should suffer loss in any way. Parents undoubtedly often hesitated to send their boys to Old Hall because they regarded it as too ecclesiastical, while those who were most concerned about the training of candidates for ordination were at times anxious as to the sufficiently ecclesiastical character of the school. It is needless to say that the problem was frequently before my mind, leading me to seek counsel and advice from laity and clergy alike. Of late years it had become more acute as the number of lay students came greatly to exceed that of the other boys in the school. For a long time my mind had been travelling more and more clearly to one definite solution, to which I was ultimately forced by the material and financial crisis which broke upon the College in 1919.

For several years before the war, owing to want of means, urgent repairs to the fabric had been deferred. The war rendered them practically impossible, with the result that the complete survey made in 1919 showed that the older parts of the College were falling to pieces, and that entire new arrangements for water supply and sanitation were imperatively required if health was to be maintained, involving an immense outlay for repairs and reconstruction.

At the same time it was demonstrated by a careful examination of the accounts that the pension had been allowed to remain for many years at too low a sum, which in wartime had proved hopelessly inadequate. There was a deficit of £15,000 on current account. I explained some time ago in a letter to the Diocese

the means taken to make the College solvent again, and I need not dwell upon the subject now.

The material reconstruction of the College involved even more serious consideration. With the ordinary means at our disposal it would, with great effort, have been possible to make the old College habitable for the limited number of boys aspiring to the Priesthood; the Divines continuing to live in the new separate buildings specially constructed for them in 1905, which are in excellent condition. But clearly as a lay-school, in spite of its long history, St Edmund's College was doomed to sink to second- or third-rate level and eventually to cease to exist. Few indeed would care to preserve it except as a school of the first rank in accordance with its proud history and traditions.

At this very time Divine Providence unexpectedly placed at my disposition a large sum of money which, on account of the special circumstances accompanying its bestowal, I could conscientiously use for the reorganization of the School in the way which I had long been considering, but which could not be spent merely for a continuation on the old pre-war lines. The choice was then as follows: the gradual extinction of the old lay-school dating from 1749, or a remodelling, for both lay and ecclesiastical students, in conformity with an English tradition going back to the fourteenth century. It was in those far-off days that I had been led to seek the solution, which has now been adopted with the full approbation of the Holy Father, of the problem that had constantly faced my venerated predecessors.

It is to William of Wykeham that we must now turn across the centuries. In 1373 he founded Winchester College, which, though founded long before the Council of Trent, fulfilled in anticipation the requirements of that Council for the training of boy aspirants to the Priesthood. Winchester in its intent and beginnings

was simply a junior seminary. The scholars had to receive the tonsure during their first year of residence. In dress and demeanour they had to observe ecclesiastical decorum and restraint. Gradually other parents sought for their boys not aspiring to the Priesthood the educational advantage of Wykeham's great foundation, and around his College there grew up the House system, as it exists now in one form or another in the public schools of England. Winchester was the model and forerunner of Eton, founded by Henry VI in 1440. There, too, the College was distinctly a junior seminary, the cassocked or "togati" boy inmates being the collegers; and the fame of learning generously imparted brought the "oppidani" clustering round the College to share in the teaching of that great school.

These two purely English examples forced the conviction on my mind that, if England had remained united in obedience to the Holy See, the Decree of the Council of Trent would have found us already well prepared. Our great schools would have continued to exist, to develop, and to multiply. Boys aspiring to the Altar or to a secular career would have been taught and would have played together; but, as in Catholic Winchester and Eton, they would have found in their separate dwelling-houses the discipline and special training adapted to their respective divergent lives.

Again, had Allen, or those who came after him, been able to return to their own country to open seminaries and schools therein, would not they too have embraced with eagerness the tradition already created by Wykeham, and enabled clerics and laics to be taught and to play together in their boyhood, while in their separate houses they were being assured all that their different aspirations demanded? The Decree of Trent would have been no obstacle in their way.

Thus, in 1920, the most critical moment in the history of the College, it was determined to reconstitute the School at St Edmund's College on the *House System,* in conformity with ancient English and Catholic precedent, enshrined in the educational history of our country.

The decision was taken primarily in obedience to the law of the Church, in order to ensure for the School not merely the toleration but the approbation of the Holy See in so far as it is a Junior Seminary (those who have read the letters of the Holy Father, published in the Christmas number of the *Edmundian,* know how fully this has been given); and, secondly, to give to the lay-students also the individual care and attention which become so much easier when a comparatively small number live in separate houses under the direct control and responsibility of their own special housemaster and his assistant.

In this way St Edmund's College now consists of three great separate sections, taken in the following order as we approach them from the main gate and drive:

I. St Hugh's Preparatory School, for some forty-five small boys, with its own chapel, dormitories, dining-room, day study and class rooms.

II. Allen Hall—that is, the Senior Seminary—exclusively for young men seeking ordination, and engaged in the study of philosophy and theology. There is actual accommodation for seventy students, but the building as planned will, when completed, give room for 110.

This also has its own independent chapel, refectory, etc.

III. The School, with which alone we are concerned in this statement, consists now:

1. Of three separate independent self-contained Houses, each with its own dormitory, dining-room, study, day rooms and library.

2. Of a detached form-room block, common to all the Houses, containing armoury, school-shop, large chemical and physical laboratories (fully-equipped), six large form-rooms, and a school hall, with stage and raised platform for attendance at lectures and the like.

3. Of many acres of playing fields common to all the Houses.

The whole School is now lighted by electricity and amply provided with central heating.

Challoner House and Talbot House (named in memory of the great Vicars Apostolic of the London District who founded the lay-school in the eighteenth century) are exclusively for boys seeking preparation for some secular career. In Challoner House the housemaster is a priest with a layman for his assistant: in Talbot House both housemaster and assistant are laymen. The aim of both these Houses is to give to their boys the guidance and assistance that an earnest Catholic father would give to his sons in their own home: insistence on all the obligatory and essential duties of a Catholic and Christian life, with every facility and encouragement for daily Mass, assistance at the liturgical offices, frequentation of the Sacraments, and the like; while detaching these things as far as possible from any close connection with school rule or discipline, so that a boy may be led by his own conscience to make good use of his spiritual opportunities, not because he happens to be at a Catholic School, but *because he is a Catholic.*

The new Galilee Chapel, opened last year, is the "Parish Church" for the boys in Challoner and Talbot Houses, and was built and furnished for their own special use.

Douglass House (named after the Vicar Apostolic who welcomed "Douai" to Old Hall in 1793, and built the new College in 1799) is only for boys who, so far as their age allows, believe that their vocation is to

the Priesthood. While in all other things assimilated to the boys in other Houses, they find in their own House and in the home life therein the special spiritual training and discipline which the future which they desire renders necessary, and the Church demands. Thus Douglass House is a true Junior Seminary in accordance with the Decree of Trent. The College Chapel is its own spiritual home shared with the Divines of Allen Hall, and thrown open to the lay-boys' Galilee, for the Sunday High Mass, and for the great liturgical functions of the ecclesiastical year.

Continued sustained effort over many years has given to the School, thus newly constituted, a staff of masters who need not fear comparison with those of the best Catholic schools.

Douai College could claim to be the first seminary founded after the Council of Trent. May St Edmund's claim to be the first existing English Catholic post-Reformation School to adopt the House System in its entirety, linking in this way our hopeful present with the ancient glorious past of Wykeham and his imitators, across the centuries of exile, proscription and martyrdom out of which both Douai and Old Hall grew. If this be so, it is a claim in no way clashing with the past traditions of the College, but rather a natural and wise development, showing that in this matter of education we need not look across the seas for precedents or models, but are prepared to stand by the same principles which our Catholic forefathers evolved and elaborated more than 500 years ago.

This, then, is the purpose of those to whom the present destinies of St Edmund's College are committed; to make of the Alma Mater, which claims their devoted love, in the full sense an English public school, imbued with and vivified by true Catholic faith and practice as all English schools would still be had England not been torn from the unity of Christendom. Time under God's Providence will show if these

sacred ambitions can be realized. Much must depend upon the appeal which such thoughts and projects make to our Catholic parents of the educated classes at the present day. Challoner and Talbot Houses provide for only some hundred boys, for it is not thought well that more than fifty should dwell in one House. But St Edmund's College owns 400 acres of land, and from that point of view there will be no difficulty in multiplying Houses to meet all likely future needs.

VI

ALLOCUTION ON MENTAL PRAYER

Delivered at the Westminster Diocesan Synod, 1925

I would like to dwell upon two Canons of the new Code, namely 124 and 125, which run as follows:

"Clerici debent sanctiorem prae laicis vitam interiorem et exteriorem ducere eisque virtute et recte factis in exemplum excellere. Curent locorum Ordinarii: 1° Ut clerici omnes poenitentiae sacramento frequenter conscientiae maculas eluant; 2° ut iidem quotidie orationi mentali per aliquod tempus incumbant, sanctissimum Sacramentum visitent, Deiparam Virginem mariano rosario colant, conscientiam suam discutiant."

In these words the Code reminds the Clergy of the essential sanctity of the state to which God has called them: a sanctity, certainly, greater than that imposed by any other state of life, for what can be more fundamentally holy than ministering to the real and mystical body of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. On this point we would direct the earnest attention of all priests to the excellent article written in the *Ecclesiastical Review* of June, 1925, by the Rev. E. J. Mahoney, D.D., Professor of Moral Theology in Allen Hall, St Edmund's College, on

"Our Priestly Obligation to Perfection." It is, indeed, not necessary to dwell at length upon this point; for, surely, we are all convinced of the truth of our Divine Master's words, "Sine me nihil potestis facere." *Intellectually*, at least, we know that the efficacy of our ministry depends upon our close and intimate union with our Lord, and that this union can only be built up and maintained by a spirit of *prayer* whereby in all things we live in *dependence* upon and in *submission* to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. These things we have been taught from the earliest days of our preparation for the priesthood. As far as our intelligence is concerned we would never contest their truth. But daily experience has taught us how difficult it is to ensure that these fully accepted truths shall exercise their full natural influence on our lives. Even if the spirit be willing—and who can say that this is always the case—the flesh is often very weak.

The Code reminds us of the *normal means* of keeping the practice of our daily lives in conformity with the uncontested theory, and I would wish to comment briefly on its prescriptions.

Frequent Confession.—All know the helps and safeguards which frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance affords, and there is no need to insist upon it. But it is not unknown for priests to slip into carelessness in this point, so that their reception of the sacrament no longer merits the epithet *frequent*. They on that account expose themselves to serious danger of at least confirmed *tepidity* in spiritual things. It is important that some one in our intimacy should be acquainted with the name of our habitual Confessor so that, in case of sudden peril of life, he may be summoned without delay. Some priests are too reticent on this point, with painful results if they be suddenly stricken by illness.

Mental Prayer.—On no point is more stress laid

in the course of our preparation for ordination and in retreats for the Clergy than on the absolute necessity of mental prayer if we are to lead lives of union with God and to attain the perfection to which, as priests, we are undoubtedly called. Yet, probably, there is no matter in which priests feel more dissatisfied with themselves than in the discharge of this spiritual obligation. There are many reasons for this. In the first place far too much importance has been placed by certain writers and preachers on over precise and formal meditation, involving a considerable amount of mental effort and reflection so that the pith and essence of prayer, so much better described by the French term *oraison*, have been obscured and almost destroyed. The memory and understanding have been unduly forced to action, while the heart and the will have been left inactive and without nourishment. So that many unable to bear the strain of this so-called meditation have finally and despairingly abandoned any attempt at mental prayer; though unconsciously they may happily be practising it more than they are aware.

But may there not be another reason, due to modern circumstances, but overlooked by spiritual writers, which renders mental prayer difficult and leads to its gradual apparent abandonment by many priests? Must the practice of it be necessarily confined to the early hours of the day? In Seminary or Community life this is comparatively easy, and the authors of spiritual books urge the continuance of the same routine in the active life of the ministry on the ground that in the early morning the mind is fresher and the will more alert. An experience of forty-one years of priesthood and of twenty-nine in the episcopate has convinced me that this reasoning is nowadays invalid, and that a great many earnest men are quite unfit for mental prayer before Mass, and should confine themselves to *careful vocal* prayer

at that time of the day. My experience is confirmed by the example of my Eminent Predecessor. Cardinal Vaughan was pre-eminently a man of prayer. He passed a long time, an hour to two hours, in mental prayer before the Blessed Sacrament every day. But it was in the evening. In the early morning, before he had had food, he was physically incapable of such an effort. The same holds good of very many priests at the present day. Necessarily late hours, broken and intermittent sleep, ill-health, a heart functioning slowly until food stimulates it, impaired digestion, and many other similar or allied causes, make many earnest men almost incapable of mental prayer at the time normally assigned to it. For this reason I venture to suggest, to those who feel the need of it, a re-adjustment of a priest's spiritual daily life, putting vocal prayer in the morning, and leaving mental prayer, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament, to the late afternoon or evening hours.

Starting from the principle that the priest must be a man of prayer, what form should this readjustment of his day take? First, he cannot be a man of prayer unless his Mass be well and carefully offered. And the Mass cannot be well and carefully offered unless there be due preparation and thanksgiving. In the hypothesis that we are considering mental prayer is excluded, and reliance is placed on vocal prayer. What is this vocal prayer to be? Here let us keep very closely to the guidance of the Church herself, who in the Breviary has given us the highest and most complete form of vocal prayer, closely allied to and very easily productive of mental prayer. Do we realize the immense importance of the Breviary in the mind of the Church who, while hardly ever imposing under grave obligation the celebration of Holy Mass save for the service of the faithful, imposes upon all her sacred ministers the duty of

reciting the Divine Office, with such peremptory force that the wilful omission of any notable part entails grave guilt in God's sight. This alone suffices to show that as a prayer the Divine Office stands in a place apart of dignity and of efficacy. What better vocal prayer, then, to serve as preparation and thanksgiving for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice, on the one condition that it be regarded and treated really as a prayer of unique value, and not as an unwelcome task. My scheme, therefore, for such a priest as I have described, physically unfit for mental prayer in the early hours of the day, would be as follows:

Morning.—1. Rise in time to allow for the following preparation for Mass.

2. Preparation for Mass to consist of the careful, and therefore somewhat slow and deliberate recitation of Prime and Terce, to be said, if possible before the Blessed Sacrament, sitting or kneeling as physical strength shall counsel: and followed by equally careful saying of some of the prayers in the *Praeparatio ad Missam pro opportunitate sacerdotis facienda.* It is clear that such a preparation would be eminently in conformity with the mind of the Church.

3. Mass, carefully celebrated, neither too rapid nor too prolonged.

4. Thanksgiving after Mass to consist of some of the prayers from the *Gratiarum Actio post Missam,* and to be followed by the same careful saying of Sext and None—all to be concluded by a short "examen de prévoyance" in the sense of St Francis de Sales, foreseeing and forecasting the principal events of the coming day, and begging the blessing and guidance of the spirit of God upon them.

Such an arrangement would ensure a careful Mass, accompanied by a sufficiency of vocal prayer of the highest order. Thus a priest would proceed to his morning refection and to the duties of the day with

the consciousness of a real endeavour to celebrate Mass devoutly, and of having already said the little Hours as a real prayer, thus preventing them ever degenerating into a burden to be discharged somehow or other in the crowded hours of a busy day.

Afternoon or Evening.—A real half-hour of Mental Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, steadying the mind by the recollection of the events of the day, judging them in the presence of our Master, offering them to him with their success or their failure; really at home with him with whom our day had been begun.

For some the late afternoon may be the best moment for this Prayer: for others, perhaps, the last hour of the day. But, whenever it may come, no one who is faithful to it can be accused of neglect of mental prayer.

It is easy to see how, in a scheme of life like this, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, careful saying of the beads, examination of conscience (all enumerated in the Code) will easily find their place.

Such a scheme will render necessary and comparatively easy the anticipation of Matins and Lauds, and the fairly early saying of Vespers, ensuring thus their true character of the highest form of vocal prayer, and preventing them from being regarded as a task.

A priestly life thus constituted will certainly quickly develop within itself those other means of union with God, described by St Francis de Sales in the chapters on "Spiritual Retirement," "Aspirations, Ejaculatory Prayers and Good Thoughts," in the *Introduction to a Devout Life.* We have now an excellent translation, by Father Ross of the Oratory, of this invaluable work.

I earnestly commend these reflections to you, my dear Reverend Brethren in the Priesthood, in the hope and with confidence that they may be of service to some among you in making union with God easier

by eliminating some of the difficulties, and tracing a way in which those even of not very robust health may find all the essential practices of a really spiritual and priestly life. God is undoubtedly opening out before us an ever-widening field for our priestly activity. May we be worthy of it and accomplish the work which he expects from us. But all, remember, depends upon the closeness of our union with him by prayer, and constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit. "Sine me nihil potestis facere."

In conclusion I would earnestly recommend to all priests the "Association of Priest-Adorers," the members of which pledge themselves to pass every week an unbroken hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. The effect of this practice upon the soul is shown by experience to be quite out of proportion to the actual time allotted to it, and is certainly a most powerful means for keeping a priest in close and constant union with his Divine Master.

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